SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XCII, NO. 3 SEPTEMBER, 1932

Flowering Wilderness

By John Galsworthy

A ROMANCE OF MODERN ENGLAND BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE FORSYTE SAGA" AND "A MODERN COMEDY"

Mr. Galsworthy's new novel, here beginning, will be published in three large instalments, giving a complete full-length book in three numbers, concluding in the November Scribner's

SHORTLY after the appearance of the Budget in 1930, the eighth wonder of the world might have been observed in the neighbourhood of Victoria Station—three English people, of wholly different type, engaged in contemplating simultaneously a London statue. They had come separately, and stood a little apart from each other in the south-west corner of the open space clear of the trees, where the drifting late afternoon light of spring was not in their eyes. One of these three was a young woman of about twenty-six, one a youngish man of perhaps thirty-four, and one a man of between fifty and sixty. The young woman, slender and far from stupid-looking, had her head tilted slightly upward to one side, and a faint smile on her parted lips. The younger man, who wore a blue overcoat with a belt girt tightly round his thin middle, as if he felt the spring wind chilly, was sallow from sunburn; and the rather disdainful look of his mouth was being curiously contradicted by eyes fixed on the statue with real intensity of feeling. The elder man, very tall, in a brown suit and brown buckskin shoes, lounged, with his hands in his trousers pockets, and his long, weathered, good-looking face masked in a sort of shrewd scepticism.

In the meantime the statue, which was that of Marshal Foch on his horse, stood high up among those trees, stiller than any of them.

The youngish man spoke suddenly.

"He delivered us."

The effect of this breach of form on the others was diverse; the elder man's eyebrows went slightly up, and he moved forward as if to examine the horse's legs. The young woman turned and looked frankly at the speaker, and instantly her face became surprised.

"Aren't you Wilfrid Desert?"

The youngish man bowed.

"Then," said the young woman, "we've met. At Fleur Mont's wedding. You were best man, if you remember, the first I'd seen. I was only sixteen. You wouldn't remember me—Dinny Cherrell, baptised Elizabeth. They ran me in for bridesmaid at the last minute."

The youngish man's mouth lost its disdain.

"I remember your hair perfectly."

"Nobody ever remembers me by anything else."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Wrong! I remember thinking you'd sat to Botticelli. You're still sitting, I see."

Dinny was thinking: 'His eyes were the first to flutter me. And they really are beautiful.'

The said eyes had been turned again upon the statue.

"He *did* deliver us," said Desert.

"You were there, of course."

"Flying, and fed up to the teeth."

"Do you like the statue?"

"The horse."

"Yes," murmured Dinny, "it *is* a horse, not just a prancing barrel, with teeth, nostrils and an arch."

"The whole thing's workmanlike, like Foch himself."

Dinny wrinkled her brow.

"I like the way it stands up quietly among those trees."

"How is Michael? You're a cousin of his, if I remember."

"Michael's all right. Still in the House; he has a seat he simply can't lose."

"And Fleur?"

"Flourishing. Did you know she had a daughter last year?"

"Fleur? H'm! That makes two, doesn't it?"

"Yes; they call this one Catherine."

"I haven't been home since 1927. Gosh! It's a long time since that wedding."

"You look," said Dinny, contemplating the sallow darkness of his face, "as if you had been in the sun."

"When I'm not in the sun I'm not alive."

"Michael once told me you lived in the East."

"Well, I wander about there." His face seemed to darken still more and he gave a little shiver. "Beastly cold the English spring!"

"And do you still write poetry?"

"Oh! you know of that weakness?"

"I've read them all. I like the last volume best."

He grinned: "Thank you for stroking me the right way; poets, you know, like it. Who's that tall man? I seem to know his face."

The tall man, who had moved to the other side of the statue, was coming back.

"Somehow," murmured Dinny, "I connect him with that wedding too."

The tall man came up to them.

"The hocks aren't all that," he said.

Dinny smiled.

"I always feel so thankful I haven't got hocks. We were just trying to decide whether we knew you. Weren't you at Michael Mont's wedding some years ago?"

"I was. And who are you, young lady?"

"We all met there. I'm his first cousin on his mother's side, Dinny Cherrell. Mr. Desert was his best man."

The tall man nodded.

"Oh! Ah! My name's Jack Muskham, I'm a first cousin of his father's." He turned to Desert. "You admired Foch, it seems."

"I did."

Dinny was surprised at the morose look that had come on his face.

"Well," said Muskham, "he was a soldier all right; and there weren't too many about. But I came here to see the horse."

"It is, of course, the important part," murmured Dinny.

The tall man gave her his sceptical smile.

"One thing we have to thank Foch for, he never left us in the lurch."

Desert suddenly faced round:

"Any particular reason for that remark?"

Muskham shrugged his shoulders, raised his hat to Dinny, and lounged away.

When he had gone there was a silence as over deep waters.

"Which way were you going?" said Dinny, at last.

"Any way that you are."

"I thank you kindly, Sir. Would an aunt in Mount Street serve as a direction?"

"Admirably."

"You must remember her, Michael's mother; she's a darling, the world's perfect mistress of the ellipse—talks in stepping stones so that you have to jump to follow her."

They crossed the road and set out up Grosvenor Place on the Buckingham Palace side.

"I suppose you find England changed every time you come home, if you'll forgive me for making conversation?"

"Changed enough."

"Don't you 'love your native land,' as the saying is?"

"She inspires me with a sort of horror."

"Are you by any chance one of those people

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who wish to be thought worse than they are?"

"Not possible. Ask Michael."

"Michael is incapable of slander."

"Michael and all angels are outside the count of reality."

"No," said Dinny, "Michael is very real, and very English."

"That is his contradictory trouble."

"Why do you run England down? It's been done before."

"I never run her down except to English people."

"That's something. But why to me?"

Desert laughed.

"Because you seem to be what I should like to feel that England is."

"Flattered and fair, but neither fat nor forty."

"What I object to is England's belief that she is still 'the goods.'"

"And isn't she, really?"

"Yes," said Desert, surprisingly, "but she has no reason to think so."

Dinny thought:

'You're perverse, brother Wilfrid, the young woman said,
And your tongue is exceedingly wry;
You do not look well when you stand on your head,
Why will you continually try?'

She remarked, more simply:

"If England is still 'the goods,' has no reason to think so and yet does, she would seem to have intuition, anyway. Was it by intuition, that you disliked Mr. Muskham?" Then, looking at his face, she thought: 'I'm dropping a brick.'

"Why should I dislike him? He's just the usual insensitive type of hunting, racing man who bores me stiff."

'That wasn't the reason,' thought Dinny, still regarding him. A strange face! Unhappy from deep inward disharmony, as though a good angel and a bad were for ever seeking to fire each other out; but his eyes sent the same thrill through her, as when at sixteen, with her hair still long, she had stood near him at Fleur's wedding.

"And do you really like wandering about in the East?"

"The curse of Esau is on me."

'Some day,' she thought, 'I'll make him tell me why. Only probably I shall never see him again.' And a little chill ran down her back.

"I wonder if you know my Uncle Adrian. He was in the East during the war. He presides over bones at the Museum. You probably know Diana Ferse, anyway. He married her last year."

"I know nobody to speak of."

"Our point of contact, then, is only Michael."

"I don't believe in contacts through other people. Where do you live, Miss Cherrell?"

Dinny smiled.

"A short biographical note seems to be indicated. Since the umteenth century, my family has been 'seated' at Condaford Grange in Oxfordshire; my father is a retired General. I am one of two daughters, and my only brother is a married soldier just coming back from the Soudan on leave."

"Oh!" said Desert, and again his face had that morose look.

"I am twenty-six, unmarried but with no children as yet. My hobby seems to be attending to other people's business. I don't know why I have it. When in Town I stay at Lady Mont's in Mount Street. With a simple upbringing I have expensive instincts and no means of gratifying them. I believe I can see a joke. Now you?"

Desert smiled and shook his head.

"Shall I?" said Dinny. "You are the second son of Lord Mullyon; you had too much war; you write poetry; you have nomadic instincts and are your own enemy; the last item has the only news value. Here we are in Mount Street; do come in and see Aunt Em."

"Thank you—no. But will you lunch with me to-morrow and go to a matinee?"

"I will. Where?"

"Dumourieux's, one-thirty."

They exchanged hand-grips and parted, but as Dinny went into her aunt's house she was tingling all over, and she stood still outside the drawing-room to smile at the sensation.

II

The smile faded off her lips under the fire of noises coming through the closed door.

'My goodness!' she thought: 'Aunt Em's birthday "pawty," and I'd forgotten.'

Some one playing the piano stopped, there was a rush, a scuffle, the scraping of chairs on the floor, two or three squeals, silence, and the piano-playing began again.

'Musical chairs!' she thought, and opened the door quietly. She who had been Diana Ferse was sitting at the piano. To eight assorted chairs facing alternatively east and west, were clinging one large

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and eight small beings in bright paper hats, of whom seven were just rising to their feet and two still sitting on one chair. Dinny saw from left to right: Ronald Ferse; a small Chinese boy; Aunt Alison's youngest, little Anne; Uncle Hilary's youngest, Tony; Celia and Dingo (children of Michael's married sister Celia Moriston); Sheila Ferse; and on the single chair Uncle Adrian and Kit Mont. She was further conscious of Aunt Em panting slightly against the fireplace in a large headpiece of purple paper, and of Fleur pulling a chair from Ronald's end of the row.

"Kit, get up! You were out."

Kit sat firm and Adrian rose.

"All right, old man, you're up against your equals now. Fire away!"

"Keep your hands off the backs," cried Fleur. "Wu Fing, you mustn't sit till the music stops. Dingo, don't stick at the end chair like that."

The music stopped. Scurry, hustle, squeals, and the smallest figure, little Anne, was left standing.

"All right, darling," said Dinny, "come here and beat this drum. Stop when the music stops, that's right. Now again. Watch Auntie Di!"

Again, and again, and again, till Sheila and Dingo and Kit only were left.

'I back Kit,' thought Dinny.

Sheila out! Off with a chair! Dingo, so Scottish-looking, and Kit so bright-haired, having lost his paper cap, were left padding round and round the last chair. Both were down; both up and on again, Diana carefully averting her eyes, Fleur standing back now with a little smile; Aunt Em's face very pink. The music stopped, Dingo was down again; and Kit left standing, his face flushed and frowning.

"Kit," said Fleur's voice: "Play the game!"

Kit's head was thrown up and he rammed his hands into his pockets.

'Good for Fleur!' thought Dinny.

A voice behind her said:

"Your aunt's purple passion for the young, Dinny, leads us into strange riots. What about a spot of quiet in my study?"

Dinny looked round at Sir Lawrence Mont's thin, dry, twisting face, whose little moustache had gone quite white, while his hair was still only sprinkled.

"I haven't done my bit, Uncle Lawrence."

"Time you learned not to. Let the heathen rage. Come down and have a quiet Christian talk."

Subduing her instinct for service with the thought: 'I *should* like to talk about Wilfrid Desert!' Dinny went.

"What are you working on now, Uncle Lawrence?"

"Resting for the minute and reading the Memoirs of Harriette Wilson—a remarkable young woman, Dinny. In the days of the Regency there were no reputations in high life to destroy; but she did her best. If you don't know about her, I may tell you that she believed in love and had a great many lovers, only one of whom she loved."

"And yet she believed in love?"

"Well, she was a kind-hearted baggage, and the others loved her. All the difference in the world between her and Ninon de l'Enclos, who loved them all; both vivid creatures. A duologue between those two on 'virtue'? It's to be thought of. Sit down!"

"While I was looking at Foch's statue this afternoon, Uncle Lawrence, I met a cousin of yours, Mr. Muskham."

"Jack?"

"Yes."

"Last of the dandies. All the difference in the world, Dinny, between the 'buck,' the 'dandy,' the 'swell,' the 'masher,' the 'blood,' the 'nut,' and what's the last variety called—I never know? There's been a steady decrescendo. By his age Jack belongs to the 'masher' period, but his cut was always pure dandy—a dyed in the wool Whyte Melville type. How did he strike you?"

"Oh! Well! Horses, piquet and imperturbability."

"Take your hat off, my dear. I like to see your hair."

Dinny removed her hat.

"I met some one else there, too; Michael's best man."

"What! Young Desert? He back again?" And Sir Lawrence's loose eyebrow mounted.

A slight colour had stained Dinny's cheeks.

"Yes," she said.

"Queer bird, Dinny."

Within her rose a feeling rather different from any she had ever experienced. She could not have described it, but it reminded her of a piece of porcelain she had given to her father on his birthday, two weeks ago; a little china group, beautifully model-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

led, of a vixen and four fox cubs tucked in under her. The look on the vixen's face, soft yet watchful, so completely expressed her own feeling at this moment.

"Why queer?"

"Tales out of school, Dinny. Still to *you*. There's no doubt in my mind that that young man made up to Fleur a year or two after her marriage. That's what started him as a rolling stone."

Was that, then, what he had meant when he mentioned Esau? No! By the look of his face when he spoke of Fleur, she did not think so.

"But that was ages ago," she said.

"Oh, yes! Ancient story; but one's heard other things. Clubs are the mother of all uncharitableness."

The softness of Dinny's feeling diminished, the watchfulness increased.

"What other things?"

Sir Lawrence shook his head.

"I rather like the young man; and not even to you, Dinny, do I repeat what I really know nothing of. Let a man live an unusual life, and there's no limit to what people invent about him." He looked at her rather suddenly; but Dinny's eyes were limpid.

"Who's the little Chinese boy upstairs?"

"Son of a former Mandarin, who left his family here because of the ructions out there—quaint little image. A likable people, the Chinese. When does Hubert arrive?"

"Next week. They're flying from Italy. Jean flies a lot, you know."

"What's become of her brother?" And again he looked at Dinny.

"Alan? He's out on the China station."

"Your aunt never ceases to bemoan your not clicking there."

"Dear Uncle, almost anything to oblige Aunt Em; but feeling like a sister to him, the prayer-book was against me."

"*I* don't want you to marry," said Sir Lawrence, "and go out to some Barbary or other."

Through Dinny flashed the thought: 'Uncle Lawrence is uncanny,' and her eyes became more limpid than ever.

"This confounded officialism," he continued, "seems to absorb all our kith and kin. My two daughters, Celia in China, Flora in India; your brother Hubert in the Soudan; your sister Clare off as soon as she's spliced—Jerry Corven's been given a post in Ceylon. I hear Charlie Muskham's got attached to Government House, Cape Town; Hilary's eldest boy's going into the Indian Civil, and his youngest into the Navy. Dash it all, Dinny, you and Jack Muskham seem to be the only pelicans in my wilderness. Of course there's Michael."

"Do you see much of Mr. Muskham, then, Uncle?"

"Quite a lot at 'Burton's,' and he comes to me at 'The Coffee House'; we play piquet—we're the only two left. That's in the illegitimate season—from now on I shall hardly see him till after the Cambridgeshire."

"Is he a terribly good judge of a horse?"

"Yes. Of anything else, Dinny—no. They seldom are. The horse is an animal that seems to close the pores of the spirit. He makes you too watchful. You don't only have to watch him, but everybody connected with him. How was young Desert looking?"

"Oh!" said Dinny, almost taken aback: "A sort of dark yellow."

"That's the glare of the sand. He's a kind of Bedouin, you know. His father's a recluse, so it's a bit in his blood. The best thing I know about him is that Michael likes him, in spite of that business."

"His poetry?" said Dinny.

"Disharmonic stuff, he destroys with one hand what he gives with the other."

"Perhaps he's never found his home. His eyes are rather beautiful, don't you think?"

"It's his mouth I remember best, sensitive and bitter."

"One's eyes are what one is, one's mouth what one becomes."

"That and the stomach."

"He hasn't any," said Dinny, "I noticed."

"The handful of dates and cup of coffee habit. Not that the Arabs drink coffee—green tea is their weakness, with mint in it. Oh! God! Here's your aunt. When I said 'God!' I was referring to the tea with mint, not to her."

Lady Mont had removed her paper headdress and recovered her breath.

"Darling," said Dinny, "I *did* forget your birthday, and I haven't got anything for you."

"Then give me a kiss, Dinny. I always say your kisses are the best. Where have you sprung from?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I came up to shop for Clare at the Stores."

"Have you got your night things with you?"

"No."

"That doesn't matter. You can have one of mine. Do you still wear nightgowns?"

"Yes," said Dinny.

"Good girl! I don't like pyjamas for women—your uncle doesn't either. It's below the waist, you know. You can't get over it—you try to, but you can't. Michael and Fleur will be stayin' on to dinner."

"Thank you, Aunt Em; I do want to stay up. I couldn't get half the things Clare needs to-day."

"I don't like Clare marryin' before you, Dinny."

"But she naturally would, Auntie."

"Fiddle! Clare's brilliant—they don't as a rule. I married at twenty-one."

"You see, dear!"

"You're laughin' at me. I was only brilliant once. You remember, Lawrence—about that elephant—I wanted it to sit, and it would kneel. All their legs bend one way, Dinny. And I said it wouldn't follow its bent."

"Aunt Em! Except for that one occasion you're easily the most brilliant woman I know. Women are so much too consecutive."

"Your nose is a comfort, Dinny, I get so tired of beaks, your Aunt Wilmet's, and Hen Bentworth's, and my own."

"Yours is only faintly aquiline, darling."

"I was terrified of its gettin' worse, as a child. I used to stand with the tip pressed up against a wardrobe."

"I've tried that too, Auntie, only the other way."

"Once while I was doin' it your father was lyin' concealed on the top, like a leopard, you know, and he hopped over me and bit through his lip. He bled all down my neck."

"How nasty!"

"Yes. Lawrence, what are you thinkin' about?"

"I was thinking that Dinny has probably had no lunch. Have you, Dinny?"

"I was going to have it to-morrow, Uncle."

"There you are!" said Lady Mont. "Ring for Blore. You'll never have enough body until you're married."

"Let's get Clare over first, Aunt Em."

"St. George's. I suppose Hilary's doin' them?"

"Of course!"

"I shall cry."

"Why, exactly, do you cry at weddings, Auntie?"

"She'll look like an angel; and the man'll be in black tails and a toothbrush moustache, and not feelin' what she thinks he is. It's saddenin'."

"But perhaps he's feeling more. I'm sure Michael was about Fleur, or Adrian when he married Diana."

"Adrian's fifty-three and he's got a beard. Besides, he's Adrian."

"I admit that makes a difference. But I think we ought rather to cry over the man. The woman's having the hour of her life and the man's waistcoat is almost certain to be too tight."

"Lawrence's wasn't. He was always a threadpaper, and I was as slim as you, Dinny."

"You must have looked lovely in a veil, Aunt Em. Didn't she, Uncle?" The whimsically wistful look on both those mature faces stopped her, and she added: "Where did you first meet?"

"Out huntin', Dinny. I was in a ditch, and your uncle didn't like it, he came and pulled me out."

"I think that's ideal."

"Too much mud. We didn't speak to each other all the rest of the day."

"Then what brought you together?"

"One thing and another. I was stayin' with Hen's people, the Corderoys, and your uncle called to see some puppies. What are you catechisin' me for?"

"I only just wanted to know how it was done in those days."

"Go and find out for yourself how it's done in these days."

"Uncle Lawrence doesn't want to get rid of me."

"All men are selfish, except Michael and Adrian."

"Besides, I should hate to make you cry."

"Blore, a cocktail and a sandwich for Miss Dinny, she's had no lunch. And, Blore, Mr. and Mrs. Adrian, and Mr. and Mrs. Michael to dinner. And, Blore, tell Laura to put one of my nightgowns and the other things in the blue spare room. Miss Dinny'll stay the night. Those children!" And, swaying slightly, Lady Mont preceded her butler through the doorway.

"What a darling, Uncle!"

"I've never denied it, Dinny."

"I always feel better after her. Was she ever out of temper?"

"She can begin to be, but she always goes on to something else before she's finished."

"What saving grace!" . . .

Continued on page 171

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

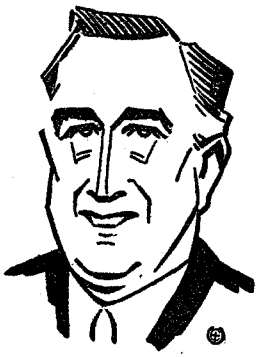
The Battle Lines Are Drawn

By Frank R. Kent

Incumbent

In this strange political campaign, so many new factors and new conditions are present that every move bears watching. Mr. Kent analyzes the tactics of the two parties, makes shrewd comment on prohibition and Mrs. Sabin, and shows how the issues will develop.

Caricatures by Ernst A. Wiegman



Rival

THE Presidential campaign ahead is unique in so many ways that all predictions as to the outcome can be set down as mere guesses, worth nothing at this time. The basic facts about the candidates and the platforms permit of two widely different conclusions, either of which may be right.

Through the weight of the administration and in a convention dominated by Federal officeholders, the Republicans renominated Mr. Hoover and forced an exceedingly reluctant party to accept the 72-year-old Mr. Curtis as his running mate. Two less colorful candidates it would be hard to imagine. Their vital plank marks an extraordinary shift on Prohibition. The drys got the preamble, but the wets get the pledge. It involves repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment and the submission of a new amendment wetter than the original Raskob proposal and almost exactly along the lines advocated by Governor Ritchie for twelve years, by the late Dwight Morrow in 1930, and by Al Smith in his 1928 campaign. It legally bans the saloon but otherwise gives each State full power to regulate the sale of liquor within its borders, subject to certain hazy and meaningless Federal limitations. If any such commitment could have been got from either party last May, the wets would have thrown their hats in the air over a victory won.

The Democrats, in a convention dominated by radical senators from South and West, nominated Governor Roosevelt, with 209 delegates from the East holding out until the last and overcome only when the vindictive and gleeful McAdoo got his revenge by cutting the ground from under them. As a result of a deal Speaker Garner, whose pork-barrel bill and record on taxes and economy make the Democratic platform promises sound humorously hollow, was given the second place. The Democratic wet plank is far wetter than the Republican plank. It declares for unqualified repeal, without presenting any alternative. While it urges the States not to return to the saloon, it does not propose any step to bar the saloon, and insists upon the immediate modification of the Volstead Act, pending repeal. This was farther than a good many Democrats wanted to go—farther, in fact, than their candidate wanted to go. His plank, brought to the convention by A. Mitchell Palmer, did not greatly differ from the Republican plan except that it was shorter, clearer, and used the word "repeal."

Following the Republican convention several conspicuous Progressive Republicans promptly bolted, or near bolted, the Hoover ticket—Borah, Norris, Frazier, and Hiram Johnson. Not much political importance, however, is attached to these, as they were all violently anti-Hoover anyhow, and are disaffected for curiously different reasons, and only one—Norris—goes the whole distance for the Democratic ticket. On the Democratic side, while beyond doubt the Roosevelt nomination is distasteful to many Eastern party leaders who regard him as the weakest candidate who could have been named, there have up to now been no bolters. Smith, whose antagonism would have been most serious, will support the ticket, though without enthusiasm, and party regularity will keep in line such bitterly hostile fellows as Frank Hague, of New Jersey, and the Tammany machine.

In a general way, that is the picture left by the conventions. Now, the Democratic argument is that they will win despite the sectional bitterness stirred up by the Roosevelt pre-convention campaign and the lack of ardor for him among business men. They base this on several points. First, they say, the unrest, unemploy-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment, discontent, and general resentment among all classes against Mr. Hoover and the Republicans are such that the Democratic ticket will be swept in regardless of who is on it or what it stands for. The people, it is contended, are thoroughly sore and all set to vote "against." The second point is that the wet tide is so strong that the real wetness of the Republican plank will be overlooked. It will be denounced as a straddle stand and the unqualified repeal proposal will swing to the Democrats thousands of wet Republicans in the great pivotal States of the East.

Heir Apparent

A third is that Roosevelt will make the more effective campaign, will have the better propaganda department, and be able to dramatize himself to the country in a way to overshadow the completely undramatic Hoover. His extremely effective flight from Albany to Chicago to accept the nomination, wife and sons by his side, is cited as an instance of the sort of drama of which he is capable. There are also the brevity and clearness of the Democratic platform, and the chance the Democrats have to capitalize the unhappiness of the country. The Roosevelt management has been sufficiently smart not to permit its natural Raskob-Shouse prejudice to prevent it from retaining the very able Charles Michelson as publicity director of the campaign. In many ways, I think, the director of publicity is much more important than the chairman of the National Committee. For one thing, four-fifths of all the money raised in a national campaign is spent for publicity. For another, more votes are made through headlines in the newspapers and a skilful playing upon popular prejudices than in any other way. Except to raise money and distribute it among the state leaders, the national chairman has no really important function. He presents a front, constitutes a point of contact for the politicians, is some one for them to see and "confer" with at headquarters, but otherwise he is not really a vital person at all. Look for example at the type of men who have been national chairmen. If in either party in the last generation there has been a single first-class man I cannot recall his name. Just think of some of them—the rattish Will Hayes, the solemn Butler and old Doctor Work on the Republican side; and on the other, Clem Shaver, who really knew more politics than any of them, and the unfortunate Raskob who knew less. The publicity director is the fellow who really counts, and this time the Democrats have one who is hard to match—shrewd, resourceful, skilled, alert, he is an adept at putting the white lead of party propaganda into the public coffee. He gives the Democrats an advantage —but then they need it to win.

On the Republican side, it is contended, Mr. Hoover will win—first, because there are normally some 7,000,000 more Republicans than Democrats; second, because the weight of the business and financial forces will be behind him, and there is no voting gap between these forces and the masses of the people. They never have lined up on different sides in the past and are not likely to now. Two other points are presented. One is that in times such as these alarm rather than resentment influences the voters, and their tendency is conservative rather than radical. Everybody with a little money is primarily concerned with making it secure, and afraid of radical adventures in government. Hence, it is held, the small investor, even more than the big one, would feel safer, so far as his savings are concerned, with the trained Hoover in a second term, when he will not have to think about politics, than with a first-term Roosevelt, surrounded by the Wheelers, Dills, McAdoos, Hearsts, and Huey Longs, who helped nominate him.

The final point is that the Democrats made a mistake when they went off the deep end with their wet plank, and will be branded as the saloon party. Their plank will enthuse the extreme wets but make a good many normally Democratic States doubtful, and the Republican proposal will appeal more to the great bulk of the people, who are neither rigidly dry nor rabidly wet. Certainly, if their votes are a criterion it did not appeal to the Democratic Senators, a large majority of whom, on the last day of the session of Congress, voted for a repeal proposal made by Carter Glass of Virginia, in no important way differing from the Republican plan.

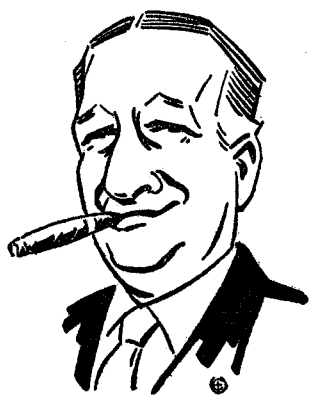
A Problem

There are the two cases as they now appear. No one can tell how they will work out, but it does seem clear that the real line of cleavage between the two parties will be between conservatives and liberals. This division was accentuated in July before Congress adjourned in the controversy between Mr. Hoover and Mr. Garner, Speaker of the House and Democratic Vice-presidential candidate, over the relief bill. Mr. Hoover urged preservation of the Government credit and refused to open the doors for loans of Government money to individu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

als on the ground that such a course would create more unemployment, impose an impossible burden on the Treasury and have ruinous results. His belief is that by sustaining the banks, the railroads, and insurance companies through this crisis the welfare of the whole people is served and their savings protected. Mr. Garner inveighed against the banks, railroads, and insurance companies, insisted there shall be no more "class legislation," urged the loan of Government money to individuals, championed the cause of the downtrodden and distressed, and forecast riots unless something is done for them.

It would be difficult to depict more clearly the positions of the two parties. Party regularity will keep most of the political figures behind their respective tickets and keep, too, most of the heavily Republican and Democratic States Republican or Democratic. But the Hoover ticket is as clearly the conservative ticket as the Democratic ticket is radical, or liberal, or progressive, according to the name preferred. This means, of course, that Hoover and Curtis should be stronger in the conservative and industrial East; Roosevelt and Garner stronger in the agricultural South and West. It gives the fight that sectional flavor so accurately forecast by the pre-convention Roosevelt campaign and in the convention.



Just "The Warrior"

Actually, of course, this is the natural party division —conservatives versus liberals. The words Republican and Democratic no longer mean anything. Each party has in its ranks wholly incongruous and antagonistic elements. The Democrats are naturally the Progressive party, but in the last three campaigns their candidates have not had the Progressive tinge. In economic matters there has been slight difference between theirs and the Republican point of view. This time the line is more sharply drawn than since the Bryan days. Already the leading Progressive Republican senators, as stated, have bolted the Hoover ticket. It is worth noting that the reason the Democratic side seems so clearly the radical or liberal side this time is not because of the candidate or the platform. As to the platform, while it is unprecedentedly short, clear, and concise it contains no radical word, not a thing to cause any vested interest to break out in goose flesh. As to the candidate, the conservative business men of the East do not consider Mr. Roosevelt a dangerous radical—not really a radical at all. They are perfectly aware of his background and breeding. They know all about his inherited wealth and his complete financial security and stability. They have no apprehension that there will come from him any radical proposal calculated to upset the capitalistic system or tear down the financial fabric. The sole reason for the conservative distrust is the personnel of the group which brought about his nomination, which will be more or less conspicuous in his campaign, and which they fear may dominate his administration—if there is one. It is impossible to deny that every radical influence in the country tends toward Roosevelt and against Hoover. Any call of the roll will prove that. And yet, the Democratic presidential candidate is a rich New Yorker who never did or planned to do a really radical thing in his life. He does dramatic things but they do not get much beyond the drama of the moment. It is a curious situation, different from any other that can be remembered.

The Progressive Democrats from the start have claimed Roosevelt as "one of us," and at Chicago took charge of his fight and are today dominant in the party. Wheeler, of Montana; Dill, of Washington; Long, of Louisiana, and Costigan, of Colorado, were pillars of strength in his fight against the hostile Eastern bloc. When McAdoo got his revenge and nominated the ticket, and the Hearst chain of newspapers swung enthusiastically behind it, the line-up was complete.

It is an interesting situation because the conservative business interests, now inclined toward Hoover, had—and have—no real liking for him. They were mostly set to go Democratic this time. They would have solidly swung back of Young, Ritchie, or Baker. Roosevelt was the one available Democrat they did not want. The linking of him with Garner added to their distaste. It seems now a question of whether the trend in the country is conservative or to the left. In a time of unemployment and distress and because of a desire for a change, the Democrats have placed their bet it is in one direction. The Republicans' hope is that the desire for stability and disinclination to experiment will be strong enough to keep it in the other. Many believe this issue between conservatives and liberals will dominate in the campaign, overshadowing the wet-and-dry business.

The burden of the Republican song will be the contrast between the Democratic record in the House and the Democratic platform promises. For this purpose they expect to make Mr. Garner, who was largely responsible, their shining target. This is pretty good policy because it will divert attention from Mr. Hoover's running mate. It is conceded that neither of the Vice-presidential candidates can be classed as assets, but to those who gag at Garner, the Democratic answer is "Think of Curtis." Among the more astute Democratic leaders there is a disposition to hope that Mr. Garner can be prevented from becoming so con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spicuous in the campaign that Mr. Curtis will be the forgotten candidate. For one thing, Mr. Garner came out of the convention as the Hearst-McAdoo candidate, and these are not names to endear their ticket to the conservative East. They do not like to have to answer the charge that he was the price paid by the Roosevelt forces for the California delegation. Second, they think if Mr. Garner is too prominent it will give the Republicans the chance to make their assault on the Democratic House record more effective. The Democrats do not want to discuss this record, which includes emasculation of both tax and economy bills, passage of the bonus and passage of the so-called Garner pork-barrel bill. Clearly the sound Democratic policy is to take the aggressive in this fight; to attack, not defend; to avoid being put on the defensive; to keep the other side there. The fear is that before he is through Mr. Garner will give the Republicans their opportunity to attack. The more frequently Mr. Garner speaks the brighter he shines as a Republican target. He is no more a real radical than Roosevelt. The reason he seems one is because he has been thrown out of focus by the rapidity of his recent political progress. Essentially his mind is geared for a Texas congressional district, not at all for the national game. Also, Democratic managers privately say that while there are 8,000,000 unemployed in the country, there are about 30,000,000 who are employed, and "We don't want Mr. Garner scaring everybody with more than $15 into voting the Republican ticket."

Then, too, there is the curious fact that Mr. Garner is running for two offices at the same time—for Congress in Texas and Vice-president in the country—so that, even if Roosevelt loses, he wins. This explains why he wanted the Vice-presidential nomination. It means he may get a chance at the Presidency without any risk whatever. Perhaps he will get away with this but not if the Republicans have any sense. One trouble with Mr. Garner is his conception that that fight is really between Hoover and Garner and not between Hoover and Roosevelt. Another is the obvious pleasure he derives from the publicity baths, good and bad, that flow from his violent assaults upon the President. Altogether Mr. Garner promises to be something of a problem for the Roosevelt managers.

As to Prohibition, what is likely to occur with this question is best illustrated by the wide split in the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform, headed by Mrs. Sabin. What happened was this:

Mrs. Charles H. Sabin has done excellent and effective work in organizing women in the country against the Eighteenth Amendment. For one thing, she made it fashionable. The enlistment of the socially prominent was the thing that got so many not socially prominent —but would like to be—into peddling buttons, gathering signatures and holding meetings. Four years ago, however, after she had exhorted her adoring followers at many chic luncheons and teas to put repeal above everything else, this flaming angel of the wet cause voted for the dry Hoover and against the wet Smith. A good many wet Democratic women felt let down, not to say sold out. There was considerable goading of Mrs. Sabin on this count. Some months ago, taking it for granted as every one else did at the time, that the Republican—her party—would adhere to the amendment, she made a statement in effect saying that it was unthinkable for any wet to support the despised Hoover. But the wet tide on which she was swimming suddenly got ahead of Mrs. Sabin and when she reached Chicago she found Hoover and his party swept away from the amendment, proposing its repeal with a States' rights substitute. Six months ago this would have satisfied all the wets, including Mr. Raskob and Governor Ritchie, but not now. The fight amazingly switched from one between wets and drys to one between moderate wets and unqualified wets. Mrs. Sabin went unqualifiedly wet at the Republican convention and dived off the deep end with the Democrats at theirs. She followed the forceful Butler in denouncing the Republican plank as dry, disregarding the solemn Borah, who indicted it as wet. Back to New York she flew, summoned her executive committee into session at a handsome Long Island home. Behind closed doors she had some little trouble but finally emerged with an endorsement of the Roosevelt candidacy. It went out that a million women, led by Mrs. Sabin, had plumped for the Democratic candidate. This was a very impressive thought, indeed. A million women delivered by one woman is just something to stop the political clock. It would have cooked the Hoover goose before it got on the griddle and signalized Mrs. Sabin as the greatest political boss of all time. Any man who can deliver a thousand votes is somebody to reckon with in politics. A woman who could deliver a million would run both parties and the country.

Perhaps the reason the announcement did not create a sensation was that no one believed it. It now seems there was ground for the scepticism. Right away Mrs. Sabin began to get resignations. Squeals of indignant protest were heard here and there. Then, one morning there appeared a list of some sixty members of the organization who said that both parties now stand for repeal; that they objected to their organization being made a partisan agency; that in these critical times to make the position of a candidate on control of the liquor traffic the sole test of his fitness for the Presidency, was very bad, indeed. Hence, they advocated each in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dividual voting for the man she considers best qualified to lead the nation.

The names on the list were all just as socially important as Mrs. Sabin—some of them more so—which was the reason for the split. So long as all the socially prominent ladies strung together, such is the nature of the human female that pursuit by the not so socially prominent was pretty much assured. But when they divided, so did the others, and the sad spectacle was presented of a nullifying rupture in this woman's organization, which had done so much to force both parties to abandon Prohibition.

The trouble with Mrs. Sabin, who was greatly pained and piqued by the recalcitrants, seems to be that she did not understand. That Republican plank was contrived to prevent exactly what she tried to do. It vaccinated in advance against her bolt by being wet enough to allow any wet who, for other reasons, wanted to vote for Hoover and against Roosevelt, to do so and still vote for repeal. It was said at the time, the drys got the kind words but the wets got the pledge. The low and shrewd purpose was to hold the drys and keep the wets from bolting. To some extent anyway it has been successful. Mrs. Sabin really bolted before the conventions. The fact is, the cause for which she so gallantly fought has been won. She helped kill National Prohibition but does not yet know it is dead.

Before this article can be printed Mr. Hoover will have made his speech of acceptance which is expected to key-note the Republican campaign. Illogical, and even absurd, as it seems in a time of such economic distress as this, there will be more public interest in what he has to say on the subject of Prohibition than on anything else. It is unwise to make predictions, but if his closest friends and political advisers can be relied upon he will declare not only for that part of the Republican plank proposing a vote on the retention of the Eighteenth Amendment or the adoption of a States Rights substitute, but he will emphatically declare in favor of the substitute. This undoubtedly will please the wet element of his party in the East, help him in the wet Atlantic Coast states, make the position of Mrs. Sabin and those devoted ladies who jumped with her somewhat more uncomfortable than now. It will also make it more likely that the whole Prohibition issue will be subordinated before the campaign ends to economic ones, which is as it should be.

It is worth noting that the strategy of the Roosevelt campaign as mapped out in July is toward placating the eastern conservatives, convincing them that there is no danger in the Roosevelt election, that the Hearsts, Garners, and McAdoos are not to be taken too seriously. To this end, the Governor has drawn into his campaign such figures as Bernard M. Baruch, who was opposed to his nomination, and has succeeded in persuading other factors hostile to him at Chicago that he bears no malice for anything said or done prior to his nomination. If present plans are carried out there will come from the Democratic candidate in his campaign speeches no radical word or proposal. To be sure, he will indict Mr. Hoover and his administration for its various alleged iniquities, but the tone and tenor of his talk will be temperate. He will be for "true balancing of the budget," for "genuine economy," and for "sound principles in national finance." The argument is that having the radical element with him anyhow the sensible thing to do now is to swing the conservatives into line so far as it can be done. This looks like—and is—playing both ends against the middle, but then, that's the game. It would be crass political stupidity not to try. And certainly, it is exactly what the Hoover crowd is attempting from the other angle. With the conservatives more or less with the Republican ticket, their effort is to keep the western liberals from leaving the party reservation. From both viewpoints, it is natural, human, and inevitable that this should be the play. However, it is not likely the tinge can be removed from the one ticket as liberal or radical and from the other as conservative or reactionary—little as either merits the brand, little as either is anything. The real question seems to be whether the River of Resentment will run more powerfully than the Current of Alarm.

Frank Kent will present a pre-election diagnosis in the November SCRIBNER'S. *Next month—"Speculation: What to Do About It" by William Z. Ripley. James Truslow Adams, Thomas Beer, Ernest Sutherland Bates, Thomas Craven, Albert Jay Nock, Edmund Pearson, Lothrop Stoddard, and others will appear in the autumn numbers of* SCRIBNER'S.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Escape to the North

By Elliott Merrick

A young couple find the ideal life they are seeking in the hardships and beauties of Labrador among the fishermen and trappers.

EACH man, it is said, gets in his lifetime what he wants most; not what he thinks he wants or would like to want, but what he really wants. The city man, it strikes me, wants material comforts and possessions, a dwelling loaded with conveniences, foods from all over the world, electric lights, good clothes, cement sidewalks, water out of a faucet, public parks, and so forth ad infinitum. At least these are the things he spends his life paying for.

I prefer mud to cement sidewalks, and water out of a bucket to water out of a faucet. The breeze and the sunshine, a suit of rags, a vista that includes no house, no man; these are worth paying for. Why should one bend one's whole life to a system of law, convention, taboo, evolved solely to enable millions of people to live packed together like sardines in a can?

It irked me considerably to be enmeshed in such hopeless organization that I was helpless before a butcher, a baker, a politician, a judge, a president, an industrial boom, an industrial ebb, an international trade arrangement, a European imperialist, a South American Democrat, and a wobbly foreign exchange. All this is not so much to me as the fall of one autumn leaf. Why should I be tossed around in the magicians' hats, almost poor one day, poverty stricken the next, talking glibly, reading the papers religiously, but bewildered and lost in a maze of apparently irreconcilable, incomprehensible, uncontrollable forces? It were better to be slightly more independent.

My wife and I live in a snug, but very gray, weathered house at the head of a long Labrador bay. There are green grass and a potato patch, raspberry bushes and a huge stack of firewood logs in the clearing of spruces. Our boat is drawn up on the white sand beach where the clear northern water laps and roars by turns. Way across the bay a chain of blue and white mountains humps its mottled back up to the sky. On sunny days after a rain we can see the shine of a cascade in the mountains sixty miles away.

The stars come out and the northern lights creep up from the edges of the world to mirror themselves in the bay. The wind shifts and fog and lashing rain sweep in from the bergs on the coast. The sun rises pink over the mountains and sinks again in the forested western hills. The geese fly north and salmon come to the river mouth. Twinflowers and wild iris appear in the woods, and blossoms on the potatoes. How good it is to be a part of the rain and the work and the changing days. We are alive as we have never been alive before.

My wife came here as I did, just looking for something, heaven knows what. I found her here; she loves this land for its own sake, not for mine. And that is good.

For two years we worked for the Grenfell Mission, she as a nurse and I as a school teacher, wood hauler, etc. We have been out on the bare-rock coast amongst the fishermen, where the snow sometimes flies even in August and the schooners scud into the harbor on stormy evenings and fold their wings like tired birds. Winters we worked at the head-of-the-bay settlement in the spruce woods country where the trappers live and the Indians come to trade at the post. The half-white trapper people are, with a few exceptions, Scotch-Eskimos. The great-grandfathers or grandfathers of the present families came out here to work for the Hudson's Bay Company. They gradually became trappers on their own and took unto themselves Eskimo women, built log houses far from the post and set about making a living out of the wilderness. They made stoves out of rocks, covered the roofs of their houses with lapped birch bark, chinked the logs with moss, built their own boats, knit their own trout and salmon nets, often had to use deadfalls instead of traps, and many times when they lacked guns or powder or shot, hunted a living with bows and arrows and snares. There are tales of wolves and lonely starvation and bitter trips, snug houses, and merry eyes.

Our friends, the scattered families that inhabit the bay, are a unique race with oddly combined cultures; Scotch Presbyterian in religion, old English in speech and many customs, Eskimo when it comes to seal fishing and dog driving, Indian in their ways of hunting and their skill with canoes ascending the big rivers bound for the trapping grounds far in the country.

At first glance some of the families might seem poor, ragged wretches, exiled to a lonely, toil-bitten existence in a cruel land. But we came to know them fairly well

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at the end of two years and we found this was not so. The *Toganish Squish* (Doctor Girl), as the Indians called her, made long dog-team trips in winter and slept many nights on the floor in little log houses where there was sickness or trouble or childbirth. In pain and in joy, in those moments far in the night when a soul is itself she came to know them as only a doctor or a doctor girl can. Hunting and working with the men I came to know them too.

And both the doctor girl and I began to feel that these were happier, finer people than we had ever known before. Many times under the twinkling eyes of some wrinkled old woman who could neither read nor write, or in the presence of some scarred, kindly old trapper, we felt abashed and very inferior. We who had come "to help the people" found ourselves constantly being helped by them. All we could do was to aid them with material things such as medicine, books, food, clothing, and they would not accept even these unless they felt that we were friends. To us they were a song, an inspiration. They were kinder and stronger than we, and wiser in the business of living. It seemed, as it always does, that no one can truly aid any one else by *doing* anything. Each of us is alone and cut off from every other human being in the world of material things and actions. It is only by *being* something that we can touch another's hand.

A few of these people are even aware of the situation. A trapper admitted to me rather sheepishly, in a moment of rare confidence, that although "the people from away" seemed to accomplish some marvellous feats such as making guns and radios, he could not see that the few who had come to this bay, the Methodists, the Catholic priests who visit the Indians once a year, the sportsmen, and even the mission workers, were all so "wunnerful fine." He looked at me with his head on one side, expecting me to grow angry. I told him he was quite right and that he and his people were infinitely superior in character and honesty, happier and wiser in the lore of living than the men in the cities. He considered this the windiest of flattery.

And as for happiness, it is not often one meets a person who has a good life and knows it, but I have met one here. It is Bert Blake, a thick-set, pronouncedly Eskimo trapper with black eyes that sparkle fire. He knows more of the country way back in than any other hunter. When he was only sixteen he ran away from home to go with Mrs. Hubbard by canoe and portage to Michikamau and clear down the George River to Ungava Bay. He has trapped and hunted and explored through hundreds of miles of country known only to a few Indians, and they won't tell about it. He speaks the Montagnais dialect as though he were one of them, and once a year when these Indians come out of the woods they always camp beside his house and defer all questions concerning civilized mysteries to him.

Bert and I had been snowshoeing all one December day over the Goose Bay hills hunting partridges and porcupine. When we stopped at noon to boil the kettle we sat on balsam brush before the fire and planned a big eight-hundred-mile trip which we will probably never take; half of it hauling on ice in the early spring, the other half running a long river in canoe after the break-up. "I been in the country trappin' every winter since I were twelve," Bert said. "And out of the last thirty summers I only missed three in the bush. Seems like you like this kind of trippin', b'y. Well, there's nothin' for me like travellin' a new river, seein' the beeg heels close in behind and the bends open up ahead, breathin' cold sunshine and seein' new country every day."

Swinging home in the sudden winter dusk, Bert had a singed porcupine across his back and I had six partridges in the bag. As we stepped and stepped and stepped, he ahead and I behind, across a wide white marsh that looked, in the fading light, as limitless as an ocean, we commenced to realize that we had walked nearly thirty miles. A lovely sunset stained the sky, one of the sad, tugging kind that set one thinking of all the lonely beautiful country off there to the west, nearly a thousand miles to Hudson's Bay, that no one has ever seen; and the snowy glades in the spruces where the rabbits dance on moonlight nights, the rocky coves ringed with birches, the gorges and bare mountains, the barrens and rivers and forty-mile lakes. Sometimes it draws like a magnet. I caught Bert turning for a look himself. Suddenly we stopped and sat down on our snowshoes in the middle of the marsh and watched the stars come out. Bert lit his pipe, and when the stars were bright he pointed with the stem to the Big Dipper and said. "My Lard, I wish't she was full of tea."

He laughed quietly, as though it were an old, old joke that must have pulled him the last few miles of many a long day's walk. When we were twisting our feet into the thongs again he said, "You know, b'y, I never seen outside where you comes from, but I finds this pretty good—the country and the huntin' and all. I wouldn't want to go and live away. Sometimes I thinks, me, we'm happy here."

Since then my wife and I have seen some of the country back in and had a glimpse of a hunter's life. Last September we went 350 miles of Grand River by canoe. We were gone four months, lived up there with a hunter in his tiny log tilt, and came down the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

frozen river with snowshoes and toboggans early in January after the hunt.

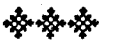
There were twelve canoes when we started. The trappers were our friends, not our guides. We did our own work and learned as quickly as we could, and poled and paddled and tracked like demons in the swift water, trying to keep up. Over the high portages we were more like elephants than demons. We could never have done it, but they helped us of their superabundant skill and strength. I don't think they hated us very often, though they had ample cause in the white-maned rapids where we were clumsy and there was no room for incompetence.

Evenings when the tents were up in some glade of silver pines, the overturned canoes drawn up beside their loads on the beach, and the blue smoke rising above the trees, we used to walk down along the shore just to turn and look. Some one called, some one sang, a frying pan banged on a tin stove. Harvey Goudie, lying in his tent, commenced an old Hungarian song on the mouth organ. The river gurgled and the stars came out. The candle was lit in a tent and the canvas shone like a ghost in the dark trees.

But it is silly to imagine that it was all pleasure. It was a long swift fight against the current and there was little time for dreaming. To ascend this road of beauty, this silent, immaculate river, to see every hour some new spruce island by whose rocky shore the silver water crooned, some bar piled high with white pebbles and plowed by the spring ice, some foam-crested rapid in the sunset; to feel a part of it and be a part of every sandbank and driftwood stump and shadow of mountain and ripple cost something. It cost in back-breaking toil, in sweat and shivering cold, in hunger and wet, in aching, knotted muscles. Many times we nearly lost our canoe and ourselves. The price was pain, but it was not exorbitant. For, what we were finding was worth having. Days when we were hungry and exhausted and there was no time to stop for bread and tea, evenings when we were all in and the bannock had to be baked and a boot mended and the canoe patched in readiness for the four o'clock start, we fell back on comparison—comparison of this life with the old life in the city. This joy and toil on the river always seemed richer, it seemed to be taking us somewhere and teaching us strength. I think the comparison will always sustain us, for this life has meaning where the other had none, and beauty where the other had ugliness. Some day it will kill us, but some day the other would have killed us too.

"Up on the land" the freeze-up came and the geese flew south. The snow fell deep and it was a new world again, requiring a new culture to sustain life. It was always like living on another planet and at the same time going to school again. We were always learning something new about hunting, making camp, building fires, finding our way. Never failing was the fascination of learning the ways of mink and marten, beaver, otter, fox, ermine, bear, caribou, and how to build a log house, how to file an axe, and catch fish through the ice with a stick and a nail, how to predict a blizzard, make mitts of old bootlegs and a stovepipe of baking-powder cans.

When the lakes got good and solid we travelled for a while from one trapper to another and saw some places no full white has ever seen before. We were hungry and frostbitten, patched and glad, miserable and cosy all rolled up in a ball of free distance and beauty that would never end. The girl became, as one of the trappers said, "strong as a man, and stronger than some." When we got down to the village in January we had snowshoed 500 miles in the preceding month and the calves of our legs were too big to fit into our leggings.



Ever since we came to Labrador we have tried to see the life through the native people's eyes; as it really is, not merely as it seems to a stranger who is looking for amusement and novelty. We wished to live as nearly the way the trapper families do as our civilized ineptitudes would allow us.

So we went to live in a house at Goose Bay, twenty miles by ice and portage path, thirty miles by water from the village. When we came there in April it was still winter, the bay was frozen tight and ptarmigan used to feed in the willows close by our water hole. Our sharp-peaked, weather-beaten dwelling with its jaunty stove pipe was borrowed from Joe McDonnough, who has moved to the village in order to give his kids a few years' schooling. Joe couldn't decide what to charge us for rent, so he gave it up and decided to charge us nothing at all. "If the roof leaks, you will fix it," he said, "and that will keep the house from rotting. 'Tis better lived in."

His brother John and wife live a quarter of a mile away across the point, and no one else within a dozen or so miles. They have given us bear meat, shown us the best places to fish and hunt ducks, taught us in a tactful, amused way and enjoyed the teaching.

The biggest room in our house is the kitchen-living room with its built-in cupboard in the corner, beams and a gunrack over head, curtains at the little windows, and bearskins on the floor. In the centre of the room stands a big black "double stove," a treasure that came from Quebec long ago. It looks a little bit like a locomotive rampant, but we have great affection for it. The first night we had no bed, but the girl made a mattress

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a barrel of feathers and some canvas while I nailed together a bedstead of boards, using squared-down logs for legs. With a couple of hairy caribou skins and our old sleeping bags under the mattress, it does very well. Having no pump as yet, we use butter tubs for water buckets, and every day I fill a barrel in the kitchen with water from the shore. Our washtub is a sawed-off barrel. One day we had it half in the water at the shore to swell when a big tide set it afloat. By the time we took notice a strong breeze had drifted it so far that we could just make it out with the glasses. It was a long row, but worth it to see the fat old tub rollicking and bobbing along like a jolly old lady on a holiday. Until spring came and a trading schooner poked into the bay we had no spout tea kettle and only a little butter, as "the Company's" supplies were practically exhausted. By springtime there is always a shortage of something, and some springs even such necessities as tea and cartridges and tobacco are lacking.

Just before the break-up we caught plenty of trout and smelt through the ice, and I spent two weeks cutting wood a little way up the river that winds in back of the house. There were nearly a thousand logs to haul out to the bank for next winter's supply. Labradormen, on the average, spend a month a year working at wood. It must be cut and hauled to the shore, hauled home on the spring crust or boomed home by water in summer, then sawed and split and stacked. That is the price of a year's fires. It's devilish hard work, but it's never futile or unworthy or petty, and it makes one very strong. I've spent some lovely times in early spring making the white chips fly from the still-frozen trees, or booming logs, long lonely summer days on the river, making the water carry on its back tons of wood for puny me. But even better are the roaring stove within and the roaring wind without, on howling winter nights. Every crackling birch chunk was cut with your own two hands. And if it hadn't been cut, you would be frozen to death.

In May the ice started to break up and the ducks and geese from the southland circled down to feed on the ponds of open water. A long, swift-trailing V of geese, the wild kronking call and the driving whirr of wings under the sunset clouds. Surely these are the freest, wildest creatures alive. Other seas, other lands, other lakes and forests and rivers; a winter is long enough in one place, or a summer in another. There are so many wide blue bays and wind-bent marshes, so many starlit creeks and dawns between the inner Arctic Circle and the bayous of Louisiana. The powerful V boring through the sky again and the lonely cry echoing over shadowed water. I know why the wild-geese music makes people weep sometimes.

John, over across the point, can imitate their call and draw them half a mile out of their course if it is evening and they are looking for a safe resting place. They circle overhead, a shotgun's roar splits the sky, and a bird tumbles down, end over end like a wrecked plane. We were out in our white canoe hunting ducks almost every sunrise and again at evening, for we needed the meat.

These were the loveliest days of the year, Labrador springtime, with the blue water, and the white ice drifting down the bay in the silver sunshine. John launched his motor boat and set his seal nets ten miles away in Sandy Run. I often went with him to haul them and learn a little. He told me how he and his brother, when they were only twelve and fourteen, spent a month at the run, seal fishing in a rickety old punt. Two boys camped alone under the mountains, with the sunshine and the sleet, the bright or gloomy distance, caring nothing whether they lived or died.

When the ice was all gone my wife and I set off for the village in our little boat to get a barrel of seed potatoes and the mail. We picked a day of fair wind and moved off from the beach with both our two small sprits'ls drawing and the boat leaping like a colt. In the afternoon as the wind blew harder the boat heeled until sliding water was lapping over the gunwale. We sat on the windward side and sang, and the mountains seemed to smile. We were a couple of miles from land, but we bent the steering oar and never luffed because the sun was out. When the sun is out we are never afraid. It was good to see the village of white houses nestling on the river bank, and to come ashore and talk again to the men and women and children that we care so much for. The river in the spring floods was a brawling rapid by the town, the boats were anchored under the point, and a schooner out beyond. With a few strangers who were ashore from off the schooner we felt shy and ill at ease, as though we should put up our defenses and yet had no defenses to put up. We seemed to have lost our masks; we could not carry on a conversation that revealed nothing, and we did not wish to learn again.

It took us two days to get home against a head wind. Toward evening of the first day we rowed for hours and hours, trying to make Rabbit Island. Often my wife helped me or gave me a spell, for we had two pairs of oars. The wind came stronger with the darkness, and the bay grew rougher so that we pitched and pounded and could barely crawl ahead. We were soaked and hungry and my wife had to bail almost all the time. Finally the island almost disappeared. In the increasing blackness we could just make out its darker gloom, and it seemed as though we were very much alone in a tossing boat with the wave crests grin-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ning at us. It looked as though we could not make it, and I thought of putting up one sail without the sprit and running back all the long way to Sandy Point where we would have to get ashore in the darkness through the breakers. It is a bad place, for the water is shoal far out. But we pulled for half an hour more and gradually inched in under the island and so to the beach on the sheltered side. In a little while we had the tent up among the trees and a fire crackling in the tin camp stove. The balsam-brush floor poured out its sweetness in the warmth. We put the kettle on and ate. Rain came and drummed on the canvas while a big sea roared against the inky island. In the cosy tent we hugged ourselves with delight to think we had got there by our own strength.

Since then we have been on much longer trips alone in our boat and camped the night in coves and brook mouths and by lake shores that are like visions of paradise.

Here at home, the potatoes are up and in blossom. The corks of our net bob on the water just off the house and from it we get more trout and salmon than we can eat. I have been making some paddles and an oar and a table and some birch spoons. The hardest part is picking a straight-grained tree or log, for knotty, crooked wood is a waste of time. Every completed object is a little work of art—to me only, of course—and one learns to do better and better with axe and crooked knife. Sometimes I must rub the smooth, sweet-smelling wood against my cheek. It would be so sad to buy everything.

Every bit of work we do seems worth doing. We catch our fish and eat them, we build things and use them, we shoot our meat and row our boat and boom our firewood down the river, saw it, split it, and burn it. If we want jam, we pick some redberries or some raspberries. Most of the things we can't make or find or improvise we have to do without, and this makes our creations of tremendous satisfaction. If we wish to be alone and unharried by a million other people's noises and projects and lives, to work out our own, we can be. Here there are people whom we can help and be helped by, here there is everything we dreamed and at one time despaired of ever finding in life and the world. We feel so close to things that at night we could no more fall asleep without going outside to touch the wind and the dew, look at the dark trees and sky, listen to the bay than you could go to bed with your shoes on.

This evening the bay is very quiet. We have been sitting on a driftwood stump in the sand. The spruces dip their pointed shadows in the still water and the tops of the mountains across the bay glow in the last sun. We lay our fingers in the water and dig our bare feet deeper into the sand to be closer to the earth's heart, we love it so. At such times an overwhelming sensation of gladness and sorrow comes over the water to us; gladness that the earth is so free and wide and lifegiving and generous; sorrow that so many millions of men are unhappy, neither knowing nor caring for these things.

HARVEST SONG

(NEW MEXICO)

By Edith Hart Dunne

Let us live sacredly
Sacredly let us live!

The flowering summer clouds are gone
The dark clouds come to gather rain.
Sacredly let us drink!
Sacredly let us drink!

The colored corn is ripe again
The beans and yellow squash are in.
Sacredly let us eat!
Sacredly let us eat!

O Father Sun-god!
Great Earth-mother!
Let us touch Thy bounty sacredly
Touch Thy bounty ever sacredly!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pet Crow

A Story by Alvah C. Bessie

She turned on her side and watched her husband sleep. It was light outside and she could hear the crow calling imperiously from his perch beside the front door. Wide beams of clear light fell through the window, and the bee that had been imprisoned in the room so many days was still buzzing feebly against the panes. She marvelled at its tenacity. Watching him sleep she wondered at the faculty he possessed for complete relaxation—the faculty that enabled him to sleep like a child no matter what had been harassing him the evening before. He could reach depths of depression that invariably frightened her—determined her that some immediate action must be taken, though what form that action would assume, she was powerless to conceive. Had not every expedient been thoroughly examined and its empty husk thrown aside among the others? But he could sleep—like a child—and she saw that his mouth was partly open, and his lips moist. She listened to his deep breathing.

As she rose from the bed she suddenly remembered, and felt ill. It was almost three months now. Three months, and they had done nothing about it—nothing could be done. There was no money and there were no prospects. She had a persistent, symbolic image of the two—three of them; well, two of them anyway, sitting in chairs facing each other across an empty space, and twirling their thumbs. That was the way the situation presented itself to her inner eye—unfair as such an image might be to the actuality. They were stuck. They had frantically pulled every string, written letters. He had obtained occasional day-labor from the neighboring farmers, but it brought in little, and their bills continued to mount.

So Bert, as he had named the crow, proved a diversion. In him they could forget their daily anxiety, pour into him all the accumulated bitterness born of an unsolvable situation—sit and watch his unconsciously hilarious antics and feel that life was good and sweet and kind. Damn his black hide! he was always hungry. All the livelong day, from morning to night he called imperiously from his perch—for food. He's young, she thought. Ralph tells me his metabolic rate is high. He must be fed.

She slipped on her dressing-gown and looked out the window, down across the stream to the hills beyond. The morning mist was dissolving, and the sun glittered in a thousand facets on the little stream. She saw a trout leap from the water, and the air was washed and clean, the foliage sparkling in late autumn colors. As she watched, a few crows soared out of the forest cawing, and circled over the house. Simultaneously, Bert set up a screeching that outdid his usual performance. She could almost see him hopping and dancing on his perch—lifting his clipped wings and flapping them wildly with excitement. His mouth would be open.

"Hey!" she cried to her husband, and shook his shoulder till he opened puffed lids and looked out at her, a frown on his face.

"Hey!" she said. "Your bird of evil omen is yelling for his breakfast." He turned over on his side and pulled the covers over his head. From beneath them she heard his muffled voice. "Feed him," he said.

She flung the door open and Bert turned on his homemade perch. Lifting his wings, he squatted on the stick and let out a piercing shriek. She saw the pink lining of his mouth and the long flat tongue. She laughed. "Shut up, damn you," she said. "I'll feed you when I get good and ready." Bert flapped his wings and croaked hoarsely in his throat and was silent. He cocked his head and watched her through the windowpane as she gathered kindling, lit the fire and started to prepare breakfast. There was no milk. There was one egg, and she set it aside to scramble for him when he rose. Let him sleep awhile, she thought; he'll be working on the roads today.

She toasted the two pieces of dry bread for herself, warmed the coffee and drank it without sugar or cream. Then she took the small package of corn-meal he had bought with their last dime and stirred some into a half-cup of water. Outside the bird was hopping up and down on his perch and craning his neck. When she approached with the cup and spoon in hand, he flapped his wings, tipped forward and nearly fell off the perch. She laughed at him.

"Well, greedy," she said, "hold your horses." Once only, she tendered the spoon and withdrew it; then, ashamed, she fed the mixture to the bird, laughing as he gripped the hard edge of the spoon in his beak and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gulped the corn-meal mush. It slopped over the spoon and oozed from the sides of his mouth, dripping on his breast. He even cawed as he ate, and the result was a strangled and ridiculous gurgle. She remembered the sea-lions at the zoo back home—how they barked as they submerged, and the strange comical sound it made.

After a time Bert seemed to have had enough, and though she knew he'd be crying again within ten minutes, she set the spoon and cup down on the tray Ralph had improvised under the perch, and said, "If you get hungry, feed yourself." He cocked his head at her and looked up out of sparkling, slate-gray eyes, and blinked them slowly. She went indoors.

He had washed and was sitting at the table. "Where's the box?" he said, so she brought the cardboard box and he found a butt slightly longer than the others and lit it carefully. After a few deep draughts it was gone, and he put it out. He looked at his wife across the table and said, "How do you feel this morning?" "Fine," she said. "Why lie? I can tell when you're not feeling well." "All right then, I feel rotten." He nodded his head.

"When do you think you'll be back?" Watching his face, she was filled with a sense of great security and ease. It prompted her to smile, but she quickly repressed the temptation, aware that his restless mind would pick her up and ask questions she was in no mood to answer.

"About five," he said.

"I can't make a lunch for you today. There's nothing in the house."

"Have you got a tomato?"

"Yes—I think there is one."

"All right." He sat looking out the side window, reluctant to get up and go to work. Across the stream, a tardy kingfisher was sitting on a limb, and as he watched, it rose easily, hovered over the stream, folded its wings and dropped like a stone into the water. It seemed gone for a long moment; the surface of the stream was almost smooth when it arose, bearing a gleaming, flashing fish in its beak, and was gone. He looked at her.

"Listen," he said. "This can't go on much longer."

"I know it," she said brightly. "What do you want me to do?" Now he had found a loophole for his anger.

"Use your brains!" he cried. "You know it can't go on like this. You've got to have proper nourishment—food—enough food. We've got to have money—enough to pay our bills and a margin besides." He stopped. What was the sense of going into that again? He had done his best; there was certainly nothing *she* could do. She was doing her best to stand for the situation as it was, to put up with a husband who could not make a living for them both. *He* had got her into the predicament, and it was up to him to get her out. *He* had insisted on coming to the country, saying food was cheap, rent a minor item, work easy to get. Well, it wasn't.

"Kids have come into the world under worse conditions," she said.

"This kid isn't going to come into the world. It can't be done!"

"Why not?"

"Why not! Because I said it couldn't; that's why not."

"I'd like to see you stop it," she laughed, and wondered why she'd laughed.

He pinched the bridge of his nose and sat there awhile, staring under his hand at the yellow stain on the plate. Then he looked up, his eyes flashing.

"Damn it!" he said. "Why did you give me this egg—the only one in the house! You do it all the time. I'm getting sick of it."

"I didn't want it. You know I don't feel like eating in the morning."

"I don't care whether you feel like it or not. I don't need the egg, and you do!"

"I like toast," she said, "and you don't."

Bert had started to screech again, and they both listened. She thought she would tease him a little.

"Why did you spend that dime on corn-meal?" she said. He didn't see the joke; that was his way at times.

"Do you want the bird to starve!" he cried.

"What did you want the bird for in the first place? You accepted it when John brought it. You clipped its wings. It's a wild thing and doesn't belong on a perch. Besides, it gets on my nerves with its continual screeching for food."

"Well, wring its neck, then," he said.

"I've a good mind to."

"You do, and I'll break yours!"

"Darling," she said, "you'll be late for work." He looked at her. "Listen, kid," he said. "Take it easy. You're letting your nerves get the better of you." That made her smile. "Listen, guy," she said, "I gave you the egg because I don't like eggs; because you're going to work all day, and I'm not; etc., etc."

He bent and kissed her face, picked up his coat and went outside. As she watched him up the road, Bert cocked his head and let out a low, throaty squawk. "All right," she said. "In a minute."

Well, old girl, she thought, you've got yourself into it this time. She sat by the stream watching the kingfisher on his morning hunt, and scratching in the sand with an alder stick. The sun was behind the stiff comb of pines on the hill, and the acrid scent of burning leaves was in the air. When she was tired her mind occasionally toyed with the idea of placing the blame on Ralph's shoulders. It *had* been a freak idea, and she had been seduced by the whimsical conceit that just because it represented such a new departure, it was bound to turn out all right.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She did not regret leaving the city; she had been as tired of it as Ralph. With the little money saved, he had come home one night and said, "Listen, kid; you know what? I'm sick and tired of the insurance business. I'm tired of following leads and talking people into parting with their hard-earned cash for a doubtful benefit to accrue twenty-five years from date. I like—I've always liked—to work with my hands. One of my prospects told me about a swell place in the country, where rent was cheap and food cheaper. I'm a pretty good carpenter. People in the country are always wanting repairs made, shacks put up. There's room for a good carpenter any place. Are you game?"

Of course she was game. They burned their bridges; he bought some new tools. They moved into the country and settled into a spring and summer of delirious happiness. But he'd reckoned without a few things. Any native could do the little carpentry required on a frame house; his services were rarely sought out. Early in the fall, he had done a little clapboarding, put up a smithy, painted some old buildings. And labor was cheap—thirty cents an hour.

Now the fall rains were on them, people were banking their houses against the winter; the sky was overcast day after day and the wind howled all night. Bert could have flown away if Ralph hadn't kept his wings clipped. She was sorry for the bird, but it afforded him so much entertainment on the idle days he spent at home, she could not bear to insist on his letting it free.

They sat for hours at a time watching the crow as it capered on its cross-bar, or on Ralph's shoulder. "He's shore a comical jigger," John had said when he brought the fledgling to the house. "I clumb four trees afore I got 'im. Ef ya split 'is tongue, folks say as how he'll tawk." They had not split his tongue, but the days were clamorous with his screeching and squawking, the porch was filthy from his droppings, and he got into dark holes when he jumped off his perch. Fearful that he'd be lost, she had crept under the porch time after time to retrieve him.

Now she could hear him calling from the house, and hear the flapping of his wings. It made her sad. But that wasn't the problem. She rose from the bank, threw her stick into the stream and watched it swirl over the dam Ralph had built. He liked to work with wood. She could see him now, sitting on the road-scraper in the cold, his body bathed in sweat, his face and hands crusted with the dirt kicked from the horses' heels. "This can't go on much longer," he had said. That was true.

She came back to the house and looked for Bert. He had got under the porch again, so she crawled in after him and pulled him out, flapping and screaming, by the left leg. He pecked her viciously, and she launched a cuff that fortunately missed. Plumping him on the perch, she got the spoon and crammed him with meal till it drooled from his bill and splattered her dress when he shook his head. "You're a pest!" she said, "but I like you." He scraped his beak on the wood like a man sharpening a carving knife, then looked up at her and cawed loudly three times.

Sitting on the porch she watched the horses on the hill opposite, as they galloped madly back and forth across the slope, playing in the failing light. The mare and the gelding reared and pranced, nipped each other gently and raced away in opposite directions, only to swerve, rear and double back. Their manes streamed on the late afternoon wind from the north.

"Krawk!" said Bert.

"Yes, I know it," she said. "But you'll have to wait till your old man comes home. You're going to go hungry soon, my boy, for the corn-meal's almost run out, and I'll be damned if I'll dig worms for you." The earth was hard and cold.

"Kraw-awk!"

She listened for the team that would bring Ralph home—he walked to work, but Carlson brought him back, thank God, for he was generally so tired he went to bed shortly after supper. "This can't go on much longer," he had said. I'll write to mother, she thought. I can't let him go on worrying like this, and it wouldn't do to go back to the city, these hard times. Quoth the Raven, Nevermore! Oh, well.

In the woodshed, she searched for kindling in vain. There were some old slabs Ralph had obtained by working on shares, so she took down the axe and swung it as she had seen him, splitting and chopping them into small pieces. It was clumsy work, but she knew he'd be tired when he returned, and decided to spare him the effort. It did not occur to her that the earthen floor of the shed was soft with a twenty-year carpet of wood-dust and chips, and that her work was consequently harder. She swung the axe till she suddenly became so dizzy she had to sit down for a long time, gasping for breath. "That was a foolish thing to do," she said aloud. "What an ass I am!"

She picked up the armful of wood and went indoors. Ralph was there. He had taken off his coat and was washing at the sink. He looked at her. "What have you been doing?" he said. "You look like a ghost." "Nothing," she said. Then, "Oh, what did you bring?"

"Carlson had no money to pay me, so I took it out in trade. He gave me some potatoes, a loaf of bread, some butter and some milk." "Bravo!" she said, "we eat!" He smiled. "I forgot to take the tomato for my lunch."

"Gee whiz!" she said, "you poor kid!" He waved his hand. Then he went outdoors to see the crow, and taking his spade, he dug for half an hour, till he had a small can of worms.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dinner was on the table; creamed potatoes, toast and what was left of the coffee. "Listen," he said, "you don't look at all well." "I feel fine." "Can't you ever tell the truth?" "What do you want me to tell you?" she cried with exasperation. "You seem to get some sort of satisfaction when I tell you I feel rotten. *You* don't come to me about every little pain you have." "Have you a pain?" *"No!"* she said. Then, "Forgive me; maybe I'm a bit jumpy. Bert's been shrieking all day long, and there's no corn-meal left."

"I'll shoot him," he said.

"Go ahead!" Then she felt sorry, and reaching across the table, laid her hand on his wrist. "Don't be angry with me. Every little thing seems to get on my nerves these days . . . you understand."

"For Christ's sake!" he sneered.

"All right! But *you* don't have to sit here all day and listen to that damned bird squawking. He's hungry all the time and I think it's a dirty shame to keep him."

"I said I'd shoot him," he replied. She laughed. "You wouldn't hurt a fly."

"I want to know what you've done today to make you look so pale."

"Nothing, I tell you! Oh, well, if you must know, I—" she hesitated. "I crawled under the porch a couple times to get your pet."

"What for?"

"Because I didn't want him to get away."

"He'd have come out again."

"Jesus Christ!" she said. "Nothing I do seems to please you." She threw down her napkin and went upstairs.

After he had finished the butt, he took down the .22 and loaded it. Then he went outside and got the crow, folded its wings against its body, and tucked it against his breast. As he crossed the field behind the house, the wind was singing through the telephone wires, and he paused to listen to its hum. Dark clouds were scudding across the hills, and an unearthly green light lay over the land. Across the field he set Bert on a fence-post, walked back six feet and drew a bead on him.

"Kraw-awk!" Bert said.

He fired, and saw the bird drop from the post. Bending over, he watched its mouth slowly open, and the dark blood well up from its throat. His heart beat furiously as he walked back to the house and hung the gun up over the door. Then he took the perch and broke it up, throwing the pieces on the dwindling woodpile. He cut some kindling for the morning fire.

They sat in their chairs across the room from each other and read awhile. The wind was howling about the house, and the old building creaked and groaned with strain. The windows rattled. Looking out, he watched the twinkling of the stars in Orion's belt, and saw a meteor. In the north, the aurora was brilliant—vast streamers of ghastly light reached to the zenith, wavered and faded out. A dazzling streak would suddenly appear high in the sky, glow for a moment, then shift and glow again, fade out and die away. The hills were bathed in its effulgence.

"I haven't heard Bert all evening," she said, looking up from her book. He was silent. "I'm sorry," she said. "My nerves were all on edge. I'm really fond of the little bum. Is he asleep?"

"Yes."

"You didn't really shoot him, then," she said. "I knew you wouldn't." She laughed, came to him, and standing beside him at the window, kissed the back of his neck.

"I shot him."

"Go on! You know you didn't."

"Have it your own way," he replied.

"You didn't really," she said, turning him to face her, and looking sadly in his eyes.

"Yes," he said.

They had not spoken a word for an hour before they went to bed, then they lay side by side, listening to the wind roar around the house, and the creaking of the old beams. She went to sleep, but he could not forget the last flash of Bert's slate-gray eye, nor the dark blood welling from his open mouth. He felt ill, and trembled; then finally he too fell asleep. . . .

Late at night she called him faintly, and as he sat up with a start, he saw that she was lying on the floor. Springing from the bed, he closed the window and lifted her back again. He lit the lamp. "My God!" she said. "This is terrible."

"I know," he said. "Lie still. Take it easy." He hurried downstairs and poked the fire up, setting a pot of water on to boil. Then he called the doctor, and till he came rushed up and down stairs frantically, trembling with fright, bringing her a glass of water, pillows to put under her head, extra blankets. There was no ice.

When the doctor came, he entered the house, threw off his coat and rolled his sleeves up as he spoke to him. "I've made some boiling water." "Good," he said. "How did this happen? Did she fall? Have you been letting her lift anything heavy?" "I don't know," he said. "I was away all day." The doctor threw him a contemptuous glance and went upstairs. He held a lamp. "I won't need you," he said, and as he entered the room, he saw his wife's pale face, turned from the light. He stood outside the door a long time, listening to the rustling of the bed-springs, the doctor's low voice. . . . The floor creaked under the doctor's steps, and he heard a groan. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Have Americans Lost Their Nerve?

By Gilbert Seldes

Americans are complaining over-loudly in the present crisis, returning travellers from Europe, where crises are more familiar, tell us. Mr. Seldes neatly replies and then proceeds to raise several interesting queries of his own concerning the state of American nerves.

Our severest critics, Americans returning from abroad (and from Hollywood, that other foreign land), have been telling us that, in comparison with Europe, which has suffered more, America is making a pitiable spectacle of itself, whimpering over the loss of paper millions while it is still rich and prosperous. M. Maurois may pay us a pretty compliment; Mr. Kreisler may say that he never appreciated the pluck of America until the sad years of the 1930's; but the native-born are under no compulsion to flatter us. The moment they arrive at the dock they tell us that we are unmanly and that our lamentations, in treble, have made them ashamed of us at the Adlon and at the Lido. The promptness of the criticism is in itself suspicious, but there are more solid reasons for doubting its point. They are, first, that these returning tourists and expatriates have been in no position to see either America or Europe steadily; second, that they lack historical perspective, being ignorant of the long martyrdom of man which is the history of Europe; and, finally, that these same critics were entirely unaware of the real panic in America, the panic which *ended* on October 29, 1929.

When the transatlantic cable was just being laid, Thoreau wrote, "We are eager to tunnel under the Atlantic . . . but perchance the first news that will leak through into the broad, flapping American ear will be that the Princess Adelaide has the whooping cough." A hundred years have passed, and the supreme achievement, after the wireless and radio and transatlantic telephony have been added to the cable, seems to be the creation of "Helsingfors"—the generic term now for untrustworthy and unimportant news. So long as communication is cheap, it is bound to be trivial; so long as news can be manipulated, it will serve the prejudices of those who receive it. With a few dignified exceptions, the newspapers of Europe publish such news of America as gives the impression, to the American reader, that nothing has happened at home or that the country has gone mad, as if Mr. Mencken's Americana were both typical and significant.

Americans, accepting these items, respond to them with the acute sensitiveness of the alien; so long as they are abroad, they are on the defensive and the moment they return, they are like parents who are furious with their children for behaving badly on a visit to grandma's. Our European grandmothers are all stately and gracious; they are perfectly willing to let the children have their innocent fun. This does not, however, excuse children, whose knuckles are rapped all the smarter to make up for the polite delay.

After the press, the great source of information about America are letters from home and new arrivals, and that both of these are full of complaints is not surprising. I have written dozens of letters to friends who want to knew whether they ought to come home, and have steadily advised them to stay abroad if they have to live on a small, regular income, and have no immediate prospects here. We all pass these exclusion acts, with a variety of motives. As for the new arrivals in Europe, their sense of elation, of getting away from the routine of their affairs, of being on a holiday, is quite sufficient to make their backward glance dark and bitter.

The American abroad is equally incapable of judging the French, the Germans, the English, and the Italians. The barriers of communication are high, and the difference in language is only one row of bricks in the wall between the native and the visitor. Traveller's French in Ten Lessons may tell you that *"pas mal"* means "not bad," but it takes years to discover precisely what a Frenchman means when he says, *"Pas mal, ça,"* and touches his chin twice in a certain way. The intonations of the Londoner express shades of meaning which remain obscure to us; and to these mysteries of communication must be added the reticences, the misleading loquacity, the pride and suspiciousness of the native.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet if we understood not only what Europeans say, but what they mean, a barrier would still exist: the European tradition of living close to the edge of poverty, which we, until recently, have been spared. The European, moving between need and a meagre comfort, does not experience prosperity as Americans do when we move from comfort to comparative wealth; and the movement back, in times of depression, is a slight one in Europe and has none of the sudden shock which we experience. We can judge the difference by the comment of European observers who, in the first half of the nineteenth century, were impressed chiefly by our excessive mobility and our passion for speed. (As early as the 1830's, the French engineer, Chevalier, wrote, *"Les Américains sont toujours pressés."*) It is only after the middle of the century, after the Civil War, that they become aware of our wealth and the luxury of our way of living. This is because the pioneer and the early-American farmer lived more or less as the European peasant lived, barely self-sustainingly, in hardship. There was not enough difference between them to be worth recording. But before the habit of misery could have become settled, the West was opened; for half a century, the existence of free land was the dominant factor in the social life of America. During all that time, we diverged from the European norm and ceased to understand Europe. While we became dollar-chasers, they remained *grippe-sous*. The difference in scale is profoundly important.

I do not say that the peasant and the small shopkeeper in Europe lives badly or even less wisely than his American parallel; he lives differently. He may reach into his hoard and pay a war debt in billions of francs, but his individual margin is puny, by our standards; he has little play between the limits of his income and he does not expect sudden wealth. He knows what he will earn, what he will spend, what he will inherit, what he will leave to his children; the stability of his life depends on these things. He is habituated to penury. To say that he has taken the depression of the 1930's well, is to say that he continues to live as he has always lived. The American, rolling by in a hired car, may fancy he sees happy peasants, or courageous shoemakers, or bakers confronting disaster with a bold eye; he is actually seeing Europe as it has been for centuries, not a country shocked out of prosperity into despair. To say that Europe has not lost its nerve, and America has, is to compare the sound of a flute with the taste of a lemon.

If a foreigner were to ask me whether America had lost its nerve, I should say no, but that its nervous energy had been dissipated. I should say that we had lost our nerve before the break in Wall Street and that ever since we have been afflicted by a flabbiness of the will, with neither courage enough to take a decisive step nor intelligence enough to formulate a plan. A few months ago, Mr. Justice Brandeis ended a significant, and dissenting, opinion with the words, "We must let our minds be bold," and they sounded like a voice in the wilderness; they were repeated by hundreds of editorial writers as if boldness—the sustaining characteristic of America in thought and action for over a century—were a precious rarity. That measures the apathy into which we have fallen; we are nerveless because we neither resist nor act. The causes are to be found *before* the year of fatality.

To put it in terms of shock, the true panic ran from about 1926 to 1929; the actual loss of American nerve was a *fait accompli* when the market broke. Since then we have been convalescing from our attack, as someone has called it, of nervous prosperity, with the moral lassitude of patients who are none too anxious to recover. The boom was our panic.

I call it panic to be afraid to sell at a profit, lest an additional profit be lost. I have met, in the past three years, perhaps half a dozen men and women who did sell in time, and most of them have been frank enough to confess their reluctance; they knew financiers of the first order and resisted pressure to sell which these few wise ones put upon them. They spent weeks or months following the upward swing of stocks they no longer owned, regretfully scribbling figures on scratch-pads, estimating what they had *lost* by selling at a hundred points more than they had paid. These rare fortunate ones mark the panic of the others. It was panic, not greed. Some of them had swung from a salary of ten thousand a year to profits of a hundred thousand, to assured incomes as great as they ever expected earnings to be. But the panic which keeps people at roulette tables, the insidious propaganda against quitting a winner, the fear of being taunted by those who held on, all worked together. It became not only a point of pride, but a civic duty, not to sell, as if there were ever a buyer without a seller. "Put it away and forget about it" was supposed to add the dignity of investment to pure speculation; few put it away, and none forgot about it. In the end, it did not matter, as the crash was no respecter of good intentions. The investors went down with the gamblers.

America in 1928, and the first months of 1929, was a mob, a little maddened by the sight of sudden wealth, its hysteria concealed because it was making money, which is the normal thing to do in America. The responsible leaders, the statesmen and the financiers and industrialists, were paralyzed, precisely as the British Government was paralyzed in July and August of 1914. The situations are almost exact parallels. In each case,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a disaster threatened; in each case, authority refused to check the force of events lest the very movement of checking should bring on catastrophe. The memoirs of Grey of Fallodon match the apologies made for Coolidge and Hoover. There was the chance that if Britain announced its adhesion to France, Germany might not have gone to war; yet if the announcement were made, Britain would have to go to war, should Germany persist. There was a chance that if the warnings of the Federal Reserve, and the more specific warnings of the industrial records, were accepted by the Government and a check put to speculation, the break in Wall Street could have been averted; yet if the warning were issued, it might bring on the very calamity it intended to avoid. That is the argument. Behind it lies the awful symptom of panic—indecision. The individual lacked courage to withdraw from the market, because the financial mob might hoot; the government lacked courage to tell the truth and continued to inflate public optimism like a small boy who is afraid to stop blowing up a balloon. The America of eccentrics, of individuals with strength of character enough not to want to make too much money, disappeared in these years, engulfed in a mob.

What has happened to that mob in three years? It has ceased to be a mob; it has disintegrated because no single passion has swept over it to take the place of the boom-passion. It has broken up into shamefaced, sometimes desperate fragments. Individuals have complained, whined, committed suicide, looked for a job, abandoned awkward standards, and threatened to wreck the Republican Party. As the mob is no longer a unit, these movements are not particularly significant; other individuals have moved more or less cheerfully to smaller apartments, balanced their budgets, supported the indigent, laughed at their illusions and avarice of three years ago, and lived with common sense, courage, and even wit. Some Americans have lost their nerve, some have not. Until we can analyze a hundred million people, and find fifty-one million hysterical, we lack data for indicting a nation.

We have, however, lost something more valuable than our nerve; our will to resist. The economic ignorance of our legislators, the corruption of our cities, the selfishness of industrialists and the arrogance of financiers, have left us apathetic. In fact, the only rebellion of any significance has been a passive one. Owing to a tangle of illegality and dishonesty, the real-estate owners in Chicago felt it inadvisable to pay their taxes; the city proceeded to sell them out. And with a truly remarkable spirit of solidarity, not one bidder appeared at the public sale, where, technically, he might have picked up priceless frontage by paying only the overdue taxes. The contempt for government implied in this action is far greater than that of a riot of Communists in Union Square.

At the end of three years of a world disaster, during which men starved in spite of the official promise that "no man shall starve in America," we take a fatuous pride in saying that we have not lost our nerve because riots and hunger marches have been few, because property is still safe and law and order (racketeering excepted) prevail. It might be bad for the economic system, but it might be better for our nervous system, if there had been more rioting, protests not only against the lack of bread, but against the lack of foresight and intelligence and goodwill of our leaders. Or perhaps a protest against politics, or against the timidity which has prevented all our responsible leaders from cutting themselves loose from traditions to offer a bold economy for the future. The American people, as a whole, has made no demonstration. The voice on the radio is still the voice of the political crooner, lulling the people to sleep.

To sleep, to dream ourselves back in 1928, to waken in sixty days to hail prosperity, has been the program laid down for us by our leaders. The irruption of a third political party would disturb our dreamy weariness; even now, when the campaign is upon us, the third party is threatened not on any major economic issue, but on the question of prohibition. To a European the absence of a spontaneous political insurrection will be the worst symptom of our loss of character, indicating lack of faith in our institutions and lack of courage to change them. It happens that our political structure is not fluid and that, as a result of generations of rather meaningless bipartisan government, we are totally unpolitical. Having seen, for three years, that neither of the two dominant parties is capable of running the country, we are preparing to go flabbily to the polls and vote for one or the other. If a third party rises, its vote may register a protest; it will not express a conviction or a policy.

We are even less insurrectionist than political; we wouldn't know how to set out to stage a riot. That is what sixty years of good living have done for us. Riots are relegated to strikers and radical fragments; for the others, the good citizens, we have masses, bands, parades—as I write this, 100,000 men, all of them, except possibly city officials, suffering from the depression, are spending a day and most of a night walking along the streets of New York in the demonstration arranged by Mayor Walker for beer as a financial solvent. This regimentation of opinion leads to stagnation, which is pre-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cisely what financial and political leaders desire, although I do not think they were clever enough to create it; prosperity ran away with them as it did with the rest of us, and they did not have to stultify a population which was happily stultifying itself.

Because we express ourselves privately, it is impossible to collect enough data to answer any question about our loss of nerve. I think the symptoms of loss of standards are more evident. I receive, for review, more pornographic books, from houses more nearly respectable, than ever before; I see the equivalent of "Fire Sales" on Fifth Avenue; I note more vulgar roadsigns; there is a trace of sourness in the oblique references which stores and industries make to their rivals. All these things mean that we are being pushed closer to the wall; and we are frightened because we have never imagined that the wall existed. We are the man who fell off a precipice in the dark and held on to a branch desperately through the night and discovered, at daybreak, that he was only six inches from the ground. The European has never dropped far and knows that he will land, not in comfort, but more or less at the level from which he dropped; we are falling in the dark and precisely because we have always gone upward, we think that nothing less than the abyss is below us.

The suicides reported in the papers impress us. Some of them are probably the acts of men who, having lived luxuriously, cannot face a life without servants and cars and parties; some of them are compelled by shame. One attempt by an industrialist was due to losses which made it impossible for him to keep up a vast spectacular charity to which he was honestly devoted. Others, without a doubt, have disappeared because they could not face the consequences of their shady operations. Yet of the two most notable suicides of the year, that of George Eastman was stoic and humanly admirable; that of Ivar Kreuger was the act of a man driven to madness by his own dishonesty. The Russian journals which took the suicide of Kreuger as a symbol of the capitalist system were a little beside the point, for the suicide of the good industrialist was dignified, and it was the bad financier, not the good one, who found life intolerable when his system, and his character, were smashed.

We grumble, we revise our budgets, we say that revolution is inevitable, but our nerves are under the spell of a drug. The breadlines are submissive; above the level of starvation there is a sullen anger, and above that, a surrender to "the inevitable." Hysteria is not visible, and the reason is, I think, that hope has not yet been abandoned. I think also that America is still a fairly prosperous country. Perhaps if we knew now that what we have salvaged from the wreck of 1929 is the permanent level of living for the next decade, we might be a little more violent; it may be an illusion for us to seek prosperity, around no matter how many corners, when the truth is that prosperity, of the 1932 model, is already here, and all we have to do is get used to it.

RENEWAL

By Raymond Holden

Under the mold, still chilly,
That this new sun makes fresh,
Red peony, white lily,
Take on a restless flesh.
The new colts in the meadows
Walk with their brown-bloom dams.
Unsheared, in sloping shadows,
The warm sheep watch their lambs.
Spice-bush and dog-wood hold
Their snow and stars in breeze
So still the slant sun's gold
Seems balanced on the trees.
Lie down with me, lie down,
Bright one, heart's earth, my dear!
Under this high, light-blown
Fragment of ancient year
We two have reached our growth
And may be what we were—
Live thing and live thing—both
Renewed, made happier.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She Was Old

A STORY

By Grace Flandrau

It was too bright, too bright in the room—hard, white brightness of a morning without sun. And the curtains gone, too, made the room sharp with light like when you were housecleaning, like when she was little and the house was strange and unfriendly with spring housecleaning. She had just taken the bed clothes from the folding bed for the last time. The bed swung up easily and now the sky was reflected in the shining mirrors and the tree tops were reflected. They were without leaves and bare and cold as if they were made of iron. Outside everything was frozen and lifeless, and the wind picked up little spirals of dust and whirled with them, deathly, along the asphalt. (Green winters, they said, out there in Oregon.)

The sheets and blankets she had taken from the bed were folded and piled on a chair. She looked down at the white sheets folded. "Yes, I must put them in the trunk." And as she looked she began to hear the loud tick tock, dry and measured, of the black-onyx clock on the mantle. It went right on ticking—strange it should—and the other people would move in and it would tick just the same as if no change had come. It had brought a good price, too, at the sale, better than the furniture. Well, she didn't care about all that or about leaving. Already it seemed these had never been her things and she had never lived here. She didn't care, she was glad to go.

It was terribly quiet with that loud tick tock. Nor did she hear a sound or movement in the next room. Ah, she heard nothing! Quickly she bent over and took the pile of sheets and blankets into her arms. At the same moment came the loud shrill of the telephone, startling her. Not so loud, not so loud! The very noise would hasten, would only bring down upon her sooner what had to come. She snatched off the receiver. It was Mamie Blotz.

"I just thought I'd call up. The kids are fine."

The kids! Mame had taken them to her house the night before so Myrtle could pack their things. "That's good, Mame."

"We'll be round for you in plenty of time. The train don't go till one-forty."

"Sure."

"I can come over and help if you want me to."

"Oh, no, thanks, everything's about done."

"Walter wants to know if it was ten you said for this morning?"

"Ten this morning?" Myrtle could not answer. Her throat closed and the back of her neck began to ache.

"Myrt, are you still there?"

"Yes," she gasped, after a moment.

"Now, Myrt, don't be silly. You know all we've told you. Fred, too."

Yes, Myrtle knew that. She'd heard it all often enough, back and forth, and now she wished to God she hadn't listened.

"Now, Myrtle, you know it's the only thing to do."

"Well"—she couldn't go on.

"Think of Fred," Mamie Blotz insisted. "He's had an awful lot of bad breaks and this Oregon job isn't too hot. Things don't look any too good right now with three children and the way things are. Any extra burden——"

Extra burden! Burden, heavy burden, heavy laden, come unto me all ye— Well, it was her fault, too. She'd sometimes seen it the way they did. Go on, she felt like saying to Mamie, and remind me you and Walter even had to lend us the money to get to the coast. That's a good argument. But of course Mame wouldn't speak of that.

"You got to think first of Fred, Myrtle."

"Sure. Well, good-by, Mame."

Mame said good-by, and the click of the telephone took her out of the room, out of the very world, and left Myrtle alone. She wished now she hadn't rung off, that she'd postponed things a minute longer anyhow. She kept her hand closed around the cold nickel stem of the telephone but did not move. If it would snow the outdoors would look less frozen and sad, she thought. A queer high growling began inside the clock

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and a succession of light swift chimes rang out. Nine of them Myrtle counted. She rose abruptly and went into the next room.

Her mother was bending over a suit case open on the bed. She had on her red eiderdown robe and she straightened up, a little stiff from bending, as Myrtle came in. Their eyes came together, brown eyes so much alike, people said, only Myrtle's didn't have that white line age had drawn around the soft purple-brown of her mother's iris. The same smile she always found in her mother's eyes greeted her, but tenderer.

"Here's my daughter," Mrs. Dahl said brightly, but she turned her glance away almost at once and her lips did not linger as usual on Myrtle's cheek.

"Oh, Mother, let me," Myrtle exclaimed, mostly for something to say, "let me do this for you."

"I like to do for myself, dear, while I can. Except," she smiled a little apologetically, "my hair." Her hair was gray and thin and was pinned loosely on top of her head. She was waiting as usual for Myrtle to do it for her.

"Sit down, dearest, I'll fix it now."

Mrs. Dahl smiled without looking at her daughter. Old age hardens some people, makes them crafty or greedy or ill-tempered, but Mrs. Dahl was none of these things. She was so gentle and unselfish one had difficulty not trampling on her in spite of oneself. But she was fussy about her health, was always having spells she thought were heart but that the doctor said were only stomach. Often some one had to sit up with her most of the night. She was easily frightened, too, about herself. Well, she wasn't really strong, they were right about that, anyhow.

Myrtle began to draw the brush gently through her hair.

"Awful thin, isn't it, dear?" said Mrs. Dahl. "I'll have to put my tonic on. I always think I will and then I don't."

"I think it's pretty," Myrtle answered. Something cut off her voice and she couldn't say any more. Her mother's hair had been put up in curl papers the night before and part of it was too curly, the rest too straight. When she had fixed it, it looked the way it always looked on Sundays or for special occasions, frizzy and unnatural but nice, Myrtle thought.

She took her mother's best black-silk dress out of the cupboard and Mrs. Dahl took off her bathrobe. She had already put on her winter flannels. Myrtle unbuttoned the neck of her union suit—"otherwise it'll show." And her mother turned back the cuffs. She was always a little ashamed of her long-sleeved, high-necked woollens. Myrtle helped her into her dress and pinned the white collar with the mosaic pin.

This brooch had a way when she looked at it of presenting to her whole scenes out of her childhood. Sometimes she was on her mother's lap in the bay window looking at the sparrows fighting in the alley next door. Or it was the smell of sweet peas in the shady sitting room, or the sound of the school bell at noon. In the V at her mother's throat she saw the locket that always hung there on the heavy gold chain that had been part of her father's watch chain. And these things had a deep-down part in her like dreams, like tears that came when she saw a certain shadow or heard a locomotive whistle and knew she was crying for some grief that had been forgotten for twenty years. Indeed, all the objects she was now putting in her mother's bag had that same strange quality that belongs to objects one has known as a little child and that makes them unlike any other objects in the world. There was the handkerchief case she had embroidered in violets for her mother when she was a girl. There was the enamelled jewel box in which the same funny jumble had always existed—a garnet brooch without a pin, one gold earring set with miniature turquoises, two buttons cut from Grandpa Dahl's Grand Army uniform.

"Those are your grandfather's buttons, Myrtle," Mrs. Dahl said, taking the box from her interestedly. "Would you like one of them?"

"Oh, no," Myrtle cried. There was something that suggested death in the question.

"And this was your aunt Jennie's," her mother said, poking the earring with her finger.

How often had Myrtle heard the earring was Aunt Jennie's—an aunt Myrtle had never seen. She put the box hastily away in the bag and folded the bathrobe. A smell came from these things as different from all other smells as they were from all other objects. Partly it was the sachet Mrs. Dahl made herself from dried rose leaves and partly the things themselves. There only remained to put in the photographs Mrs. Dahl always kept with her, framed pictures of Myrtle, Fred, and the three children. There were several of the baby. His grandmother loved him best. There was also a picture of Myrtle's father, who had died so long before he must be more like a legend than a memory to Mrs. Dahl herself. And suddenly Myrtle saw these pictures standing on the table in the narrow room that would be her mother's in the Home. They would be neatly arranged on the bureau and they would be all that remained of the accumulated meanings and affections of her long life. Myrtle's breath came painfully out of her tightened throat. She closed the suitcase and sat down.

Now all they had to do was wait. Mrs. Dahl gazed down into the street and that look of gravity that sometimes came, Myrtle had noticed, to the faces of old people stole across her mother's.

"Looks like snow tonight," Mrs. Dahl said, rousing herself, "the papers say it'll be an early winter."

"I guess so, Mother." An early winter and a long

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one. How would it seem, shut up in a public institution —among strangers? The days and the days all alike and outside the snow.

"Land sakes, look at that auto, smoking like it's on fire."

"I guess it's not on fire, dear. They do that when the engine's dirty."

After each remark a silence fell. But everything Myrtle could think of to say would have, it seemed to her, some painful significance. She couldn't speak of the children; they had taken their final leave of their grandmother the night before, or of Fred, waiting for them out in Oregon. She could not bring herself to say Walter Blotz would be there at ten. Her mother knew he was coming some time that morning to take her to the Home, but she had not asked when. Once Myrtle saw her mother steal a look, a hungry, furtive look, at her and then, not to be caught at it, she dropped her eyes to Myrtle's hand.

"That's a pretty ring, Daughter. Is it new?"

"Why, Mother, I've had it forever."

"I didn't remember it."

She turned it round and round on Myrtle's finger. It seemed to her daughter that her fingers touched the ring humbly, that already she felt beneath the others because she no longer had a home and was to be an inmate of a public institution.

"Mother," she cried, "if Fred gets on I'll come back for you. I'll come back as soon as I can."

Mrs. Dahl said nothing. An automobile honked outside the window and they both looked out. It wasn't Walter.

"I guess," Myrtle blurted out, "I better get my hat."

"Daughter!" Mrs. Dahl's voice burst suddenly shrill. "Surely it's too soon!"

Then, hastily, to cover this lapse, she got up. The room was furnished with a ponderous walnut set she had brought from her early home, the first pieces of furniture she had ever owned. They were so big they made the small room very crowded. She crossed the floor with the brisk uncertain step of the old, swaying a little when she rose and bumped into the table as she passed it. She went to the great walnut bookcase they always called the secretary. There was a roll top of finely grained wood over the writing part and above that book shelves behind glass doors. The new people had bought this for eight dollars—the second-hand man had only offered five.

"Pretty wood, isn't it?" She bent forward and looked at the grain closely.

Once more a horn sounded. This time it was Walter.

"There's Walter, Mother." Myrtle got the words out with a rush.

"Yes, Daughter."

"Oh, Mother, Mother!" The pain in her throat found relief at last in a storm of sobbing. "Oh, Mother, I feel so bad, I feel so bad."

"Hush, dearie, it's all right. Don't feel bad, my daughter, my sweet." Tears were on her mother's cheeks, but in her eyes was another look, a look beyond tears. She was old and she had given up many things.

Myrtle saw the look and a kind of terror mingled with her grief. To her, too, some day, the end of all things. And perhaps her mother, too, knew that and pitied her! She pities me, her heart cried, bursting, and I must bear that, too.

THE SHADOW

By Bernice Kenyon

This is the time when we have all we need . . .
The hour is quiet, and you are very near.
We can breathe the selfsame air; we can wait and hear
The same late music, measuring time and space
In briefest intervals; or we can read
Our books obliviously, in the usual place.

And there is the bowl of flowers, and meat and bread
Set out, and wine in amber-tinted glasses
Full of the evening light. . . . If a shadow passes
There, by the window, on the familiar street,
Why should I feel this moment full of dread?
Why should you stand and watch its slow retreat?

Since we are here, look not so far away . . .
What can you find past any window's rim
More marvellous than this? . . . The day grows dim—
I am afraid the dark will cover me
Too closely. . . . You might turn, with a word to say,
And so find no one for your eyes to see . . .

Turn back to me! What would you have—what more?
This is our long tomorrow—the wave of time
Ready to break, with one high reach to climb
Before it bends and sweeps us wide apart—
The long, long reach—out—upward—toward some shore
Remote and far and frightening to the heart.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

Beer Town

By Meridel LeSueur

(This is a true narrative of the life of Joe Arver, resident of Beer Town, as related by him to the author.)

I SHOULD have had a bad life. Any reformer would say so. I was bred, born and raised in the shadow of the old-time, pre-Volstead brewery. Below it, in the shadow, lived the Germans, the Irish, the Swedes, and it rose upon the hill like a castle and from it night and day came the yeasty odor of beer, of sprouting barley, brewing-vats, of the steam, the bubble of new beer. Building topped building rising up the hill, hefty, solid German buildings, stables, kennels, slaughter-houses, barns rising from the tracks and giving way to the brew-houses, the offices, and at the very summit the home of Mr. Hamm himself, over which, day and night, there flew the flag of the United States of America.

It was a complete city and could have been cut off by war or famine and sustained itself as long as any feudal city. There were clustered about the brewery, stables and kennels, slaughter-houses, pig-stys, sheep bars and sheds, for Mr. Hamm kept, besides the giant horses that pulled his wagons, fine racing-horses and pedigreed dogs; he slaughtered his own animals and maintained butcher-shops where he sold meat to his many serfs. There were carpenter and metal shops where saloon-fixtures were manufactured; there were tinshops and harness-shops and an icehouse and barrel works, besides the buildings where the brew vats were for the making of many kinds of beers. A tunnel ran below the street where trains constantly came and went, unloading sugar and barley and cattle carrots, and loading and departing for the corners of the world with Mr. Hamm's good beer slapping the sides of kegs.

The farmers came from the country and took the waste malt away for their cattle. They would drive under the bridge that ran over the tunnel, from whence came a dank smell of waste malt; they would load their wagons and drive away with the malt drip, dripping from the boards as they drove, dripping along the street clear out of town, leaving that dank, sour smell in their wake. I followed the trail of dripping malt once and saw for the first time the roll of country outside the town. It was vivid to me, following the malty smell and coming upon the hills rolling up from the Mississippi.

The resemblance to a feudal castle was increased when later Mr. Hamm's sons took unto themselves wives, and his daughters were wedded and he built beside his own Rhine mansion other preposterous edifices looking down over the town and the Mississippi.

Below across the tracks on the other side lay what was called the Hollow. Here lived the man-power that manned the brewery. They lived in homemade houses that looked as if they were built from scraps like a family quilt, but they had an intimate aspect, for each man had put his house together like a piece of embroidery, with the color of an old sign and a flash of tin, but they were tight and neat with smoke curling cosily from the slanting chimneys in winter. A stream ran through the Hollow, and over this lovely thread of water sat the outhouses, each delicate and crazy shamble propped over the stream on planks. They tipped over easily in a wind or when pushed. In the back of each house there was a small patch of garden set out crookedly, and usually a rickety fence marked the boundaries of a tiny square of "lawn" in front. The streets were unpaved and in spring full of water.

Here I drew my first breath of yeasty air. On the wind the smell of beer ferment came down the hill, blowing over the Hollow like the smell of orange or almond blossom might have come. Just a whiff of beer holds in it for me the whole scene of my childhood like a whiff of hedge flower or of heather or wild rose might for an Englishman. It was the very beery breath of God leaning over from the brewery darkness above us at night that we breathed, and in which we had our being. The nostalgia of my first love was in it, for I pressed her against the wall of the malt-house on a night when a moon made the shadows blacker. I remember my mother, too, with the smell of freshly baked bread in summer and the heavy swath of beer air pouring down from the hill.

In the morning we were awakened by the rumbling of the beer-wagons going out loaded to the town. The streets leading to the brewery were of cobblestones because the huge beer-wagons were death on ordinary pavement. The clatter of horses and the rumble of the heavily burdened wagons made a fierce rumble and clanging, and half in our dreams we started up seeing the splendid horses treading sparks and hearing that strange sound of hoofs beating out and away in the morning. We ran to the windows and looked up the hill and saw the brewery rising all safe and stable with the cattle in the barns, the men climbing up to work, the animals waking and lowing, the drivers driving out their wagons of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beer, cracking their whips, crying out to each other, swearing full-mouthed oaths, the horses snorting and backing and galloping off, rumbling the great wagons into town. We saw the complete, the substantial, feudal city flashing up in the morning air.

Playing along the cobblestone streets, peering into the dim shops on our first walks, we could see the workmen inside making harness and barrels, and the blacksmith with the upturned hoof of a great Percheron; or stand and watch a man lift the kegs off the wagon and roll them into the saloon on grass mats, seeing the good bend of a man's back under the round up-tossed keg and his legs coming down firm and bent a bit under the burden, his body a line and curve of load-bearing; seeing the men going and coming in a coiling stream from the brewery and the merry life of the Hollow after the day was over, the young "rushing the can" to the saloons for the supper beer; all this made us citizens of beer town from the first and we took of its opulence, ease, and lordliness. Our fathers were men who felt they were making good beer and drinking it too. Our lives and the lives of Germans, Irish, Swedes, tradesmen, barrel and harness makers, racers, gamblers, butchers, breeders, beer-drinkers, all settled around the brewery like bees around a glutted hive.

We all drank beer, but my father got drunk only on Saturday nights, and then it could not at all be compared to "modern" drunkenness produced by "moon." For the most part he became only jovially drunk, and at the worst suffered only a touch of silliness, a heightening and magnifying of natural appetites. The kids were sent in the evening with their cans for the supper beer. Our fathers were supposed to drink at the brewery during work; they were given checks upon which they got so much beer gratis. Besides it was a fair day when they did not stop at the saloon on the way home. We had beer for supper. The babies were given it. It was poured out foaming all around, sizzling over the glass in white suds. We used it instead of water, and the Hollow and its like produced no gangsters, or holdup men that I know of.

We did have our gangs, naturally. There was a brewery gang and a west-side gang and east-side gang, and wars between them. At a certain stage a boy must travel in a gang. He feels he cuts a poor figure, his hands and feet have grown a considerable distance away from him, and so he has for the nonce practically lost control of them. A "sickly down" is likely to appear and be a subject for jest among his contemporaries. He finds himself neither of one world nor another, a bandit, a Hamlet, a clown, a hero or a rake. Being only part a boy and certainly less a man he makes himself whole by ganging up with other lost fragments of his kind. He travels in packs like wolves. Perhaps the present-day youth never gets this gang craze out of his system and so carries it on too far into maturity.

Ganged up, we were a valiant, a bold and invincible crew warring on the brewery, stealing, buccaneering, filibustering, sacking, pillaging. We went on raiding tours. We became Indians, pirates; we looted, destroyed, tormented the weak, persecuted the widowed. Together we were actually without fear. We did the most outrageous and dangerous things, a mysterious deviltry and power was in us, and a wild strength of the hunt and the mystery of who would be strongest. We got bloody noses and broken bones and our clothes were torn to shreds. Together we challenged and defied all existence; divided we most often got a licking.

We took barrels of tar to the top of the brewery hill and rolled them down so that the blacksmith left off shoeing his horse and ran out to see it, and out of the shops along the hill ran all the men with their work still in their hands to watch the course of the rolling barrel and shout at those in its wake until it at last would turn and smash up against a house or a tree.

In this day we could hardly escape investigation or the juvenile court or both, but then the brewery looked upon our escapades with a paternal wink and the policemen swore at us mildly. It was evidently of no alarming nature that life in its exuberance might be likely to foam over the top like good beer suds. People seemed rather to expect that there would be some natural foaming over, for every one knows what an explosion a ferment can produce. Life, like good beer, was effervescent. We were looked upon as the suds, and it was hoped that once off the top of the glass good beer would be below.

It was very foolhardy indeed for a copper to interfere too much. We could make his life extremely uncomfortable. We were machiavellian in devices. We were fond of shinnying up a drainpipe, gaining the roof of a house with rocks concealed in our breeches and then dropping them gently on the offending copper. He would be helpless in the matter of pursuit, having an anatomy unsuited to shinnying up drainpipes. Cops only added considerable spice to our life.

They always found it difficult to catch us. The brewery built upon a hill made it easy to disappear quickly over roofs, down alleys, through barns, into trees. We could scatter in as many directions as there were boys, and be invisible in the wink of an eye. No eighteenth-century waif knew the roofs of Paris better than we knew the stables, caves, and willows that would secrete us. A policeman cannot follow forty boys hoofing it over the ground like billy-goats. He can at best catch but one boy and then he has but a fragment of the great body of crime.

Having scattered in forty directions we would come together again at what we called our "kubeen." The origin of this word is unknown to me, but this "kubeen" was a hole dug in the ground, covered over with sod, and topped with branches so it would go as unseen as a ground-squirrel's hole. There was also a chimney, so a fire might be built inside. The door was low and we had to crawl in. It was a pleasant sensation creeping in and feeling safe underground, snug and secret and powerful.

Here we brought our loot—potatoes, chickens, watermelons, apples. We had a squirrel's passion for collecting food. Sometimes we got a whole case of beer for the "kubeen." The wagons of the brewery were left outside the stables in the streets at night and sometimes they would contain undelivered beer. Scouting about in the dusk we would spot such a wagon and after nightfall swoop down, open the wagon, and fill our breeches with bottles of beer. We always wore breeches of the proper kind, knickers banded at the knee, full and baggy, so that many things might

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be concealed therein besides anatomy. Those whose mothers made them wear overalls simply tied a cord around their legs below the knee. We could carry at least six bottles of beer in each leg. Stuffing bottles in our pantaloons so, we would run clanking to the kubeen and imbibe like our sires.

Along with other passions we had one for collecting every kind of old rubbish, iron, cans, paper, nails. Cupidity prompted the collection of iron. We would take iron wherever we saw it, removing even railroad ties if we could. These were sold to the sheeny. We got into an old church where the Hamms stored old saloon-fixtures and took every brass thing away and every single thing that shone.

We were afraid only of two things: Negroes, because we scarcely ever saw one, so they were horrific figures from Arabian nights; and of Matt, whom we called Butcher because we saw him kill the horses that had fallen down in a sleet or had for some reason to be shot. We practised a peculiar rite, dating perhaps from savagery. We would march solemnly and with some dread on our part around the slaughter-house, which harbored this violence, the stench of blood, and the cries of murdered animals. In homage to such a fear we would get in a long line and march round and round the high board wall that enclosed the yards. Round and round we would go chanting together in high shrill intonation:

"Butcher, butcher, kill a louse,
Hang him in the slaughter-house."

Butcher was a huge man, with strong, bare arms, small head, little eyes full of superstition. He would pay no attention at first, but we were capable of terrible persistence and could march singing for as much as an hour. Then he would be able to stand it no longer and would charge out of the yard at us, scattering us like chaff. We would love it and flee in terror and ecstasy, half expecting to be caught and killed, squealing like the little pigs whose knuckles we ate for our suppers.

We had only one ally in beer town. He was an oldish man, late from the old country, who drove one of the beer-wagons. He was the kind of man who looked as if he sailed a ship all day, and he drove his horses as if they were on the courses of the Cæsars. If he drove them every day for twenty years I have no doubt but he would still drive them with that special flourish and crack of the whip. On Sundays, a poor day for boys and bandits, he asked us to the horse-barns for talk and sports. We would stand in the window of the hay-mow and jump down into the fine sand of the embankment below. When we tired of this we sat on the hay and he told us about the old country, and one story particularly would delight us because of its mystery and its nonsense.

"Once upon a time in Hartgo Mountains," he would begin solemnly but with just a twinkle on his face, especially visible to all who had heard the story, "there was a band of robbers. They had been out robbing all day and they were verrrrry tired. They sat around the camp fire. 'Now, Si,' the captain said, 'tell us a story.' Si went on with this saaad and drearrry story. 'Once upon a time in Hartgo Mountains there was a band of robbers. They had been robbing all day and they were verrry tired . . .' " and so he would repeat this mysterious jargon as much as twenty times and we were wild-eyed with hysteria, sliding down the sides of the doors, rolling on the floor with laughter until we wept and hugged each other, and finally were exhausted and happy with the late sun falling in upon the hay and the munching horses.

Sometimes he was a little drunk and then he talked well about the old country, and everything he described was surrounded with a kind of light more golden than the light that shone in America, and everything had a flavor so rich that it made us all a little sick and dizzy thinking about it. His words would smack of many foods and drinks that had satisfied huge appetites and rounded many a paunch; of men with "great and nimble throats," of good drinking and plentiful eating, cramming, swilling, of roistering and carousings, of brown and bitter beers, of his own beers he had made, adding myrtle leaves; of beers of Munich, where they made what he called light and happy beers. "Barley beers do not fatten too much," he would say. "These butchers here like to make themselves fat on bad beer. In Munich light and happy beer and light and happy people. Here . . ." He would spit a huge gob that rolled itself up in the manure.

He would tell of a great cellar in the middle of the town with kegs and beer on tap. How in his youth he got tight as a drum, of beers yellow and bitter as gall, of harvest beers, of how the beer-bell would ring before Michaelmas and that would be the signal for all of the village to light their fires for the brewing.

He told a story about a saint who saw a vessel with twenty pails full of beer standing. The saint blew on the cork and it was loosed from the bung-hole and the vessel flew into pieces with a loud noise so that the beer ran out and it was evident that the devil was in the cask. And he told how an Irish saint called Bridget came to Germany and changed water into wine, and of a cave he knew of in his youth that contained twenty thousand barrels of good beer, and where was it now?

He often wept in his cups because he could not be a beer-collector. He coveted the fine vests that they wore and the diamonds and their gullets, for a beer-collector had to be able to hold a great deal of beer and collect his money straight with a tight belt. The beer-collectors went about too with a fine horse and buggy and collected what was due Mr. Hamm from the saloons, and Mr. Hamm in one way or another had a large financial paw in every one. The beer-collectors were his ambassadors. They went to funerals and tendered the regards of the brewery at births, deaths, weddings, and evictions. At all these functions they must treat and be treated. They all had excellent paunches preceding them by at least a foot.

Peder was the most gorgeous of the collectors, riding in a splendid buggy behind one of the finest horses, an excellent fiery creature who seemed to be shod with sparks, and Peder reined him sharply over the cobblestones going from saloon to saloon, his bag filling with money.

I went often to the home of Bowley Varrish, whose father was foreman at the brewery. There was an air of abundance and corpulence about the house that attracted me. It seemed to be the aim of Mrs. Varrish to get her children as round as possible. The house and al-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most everything in it had been made by hand. There was a large kitchen with an oak table that shone and on it Mrs. Varrish would be cutting large hunks of homemade bread for Bowley and me. Upon these hunks she would put a thick smearing of lard, and then with a tremendous movement that set all her soft flesh shaking she would sprinkle over it salt and black pepper. Sometimes there would be a blood sausage with it, and Bowley liked also a raw egg to suck.

Bowley's father, exactly like Bowley, only more round, more huge, would come to the door of the malthouse and shout right down to his little house in the Hollow. He had a huge voice, and some one would run out of the outhouse and look up the hill, and Mrs. Varrish would stand at the kitchen door, her hand at her ear, and one of the girls would come to the window and lean out and Mr. Varrish would shout down that he wanted pigs' knuckles for supper or for some one to bring him his specs or his coat.

In the evenings Beer Town, the Hollow, the streets leading up and down the hill, were agog with life. Women came out and stood at the fences talking or shouted across the narrow streets. The bar-keeper, Tony, would come out of his saloon and wait to waylay the men going home. He could always entice a man with a full pocket into his saloon.

"Glazabeer, boys?" Tony would say, blocking their way in the road, in his hale way suggesting that good fellowship was as good as good beer. "Begates, Glazabeer, boys?" Begates, slap on the shoulder, warm meeting, the bar glistening within, no shrewish women, no brats, no trouble, glistening warmly of forgetfulness and pleasure. "A schnit of beer, boys?"

Inside the saloon was the oak darkness brightened by the shine of bottles and many mirrors where a man could see what a fellow he was as he tippled. On the bar were nibbles of food, a dish of pretzels, pickles, sausages, a dish of cloves so the missus wouldn't know you had stopped, pigs' feet, dishes of silver fishes, on holidays halved eggs. There were shine and ease and talk of men in the evening.

Here were activity and opulence, and we felt we belonged to it and had a hand in it all. There was nothing niggardly about it. It was a day before efficiency. An institution of that sort still had men working in it besides dollars. They drove a hard bargain and they made money of course, but they did it with the gambling gesture of Tammany. There was always a little flourish about it, something grand and warm, and there was never a hard bargain driven without a great deal of drinking and clinking of gold and driving hither and away behind a handsome pair of bays.

In my memory there is always something flamboyant like this and highly colored, full of sound and gargantuan, rank odors, and sights of men with round fat cheeks and bellies, of good eating and drinking and carousal, of Augean stables and huge horses, and of women mixed with the yeasty smell of beer. It was like some gigantic oriental tale of joy and cruelty amidst giant animals, policemen half comic and half dreadful, and gorgeous wildness and freedom tanged with the not yet lost old worldliness that clung to our mothers and fathers, with the faint suggestion of the new-world outlawry, buccaneering, pirating, of which stories and ambitions we were filled to the brim.

The Hollow and its wreckage still lie below the track, the outhouses still over the stream. Hamm's Brewery is still there, its Rabelaisian power greatly reduced by what is called the Eighteenth Amendment. Hamm manufactures near beer and soft drinks and the men who work there don't seem like the men I remember. You don't see the Rubens flesh, the bursting tight skin holding beer and pigs' knuckles and cheeses. They are now efficient, I suppose. Varrish could no longer stand at the door of the malthouse, one hand over his rotund belly, and yell down the hill. It would not be done. Such a man would not be hired perhaps if such a man exists, but the chances are that he has long since gone to the beergarden of his fathers and did not live to bedevil himself with near beer or moonshine, or lose his corpulency or ruin his lively face with that haggard, lean, and hungry look of the modern drinker.

A ROOM IN THE COUNTRY

By Nathaniel Burt

My room is sieged about with trees
That break the light a thousandfold
In summer to a shimmering green
And in the autumn into gold,
To gold that slumbers on the floor
And quietly moves from door to door.

When I wake up the cold, wet birds
Cry chattering in the crystal dawn;
The windows breathe the smell of dew
That lies on the fresh-waking lawn
And there upon my western wall
The tremulous wings of daylight fall.

The noon is hushed; the cicadas
Drum to green slumber wheat and leaves;
The flies swim in the dusty air
And sparrows nap beneath the eaves.
Sleep moves along the moted beams,
And the langourous shadows harbor dreams.

The evening brims with glittering song
In swift mosaic of winged tone
That flames through all the misty land
And to the russet sky is thrown
Until the dusk has closed the day
And lit the stars upon its way.

The violet tides of night enclose
And flood to blindness all the house
Nothing but sounds of darkness now
(Outside a gust, inside a mouse)
Tell me my room's about me still
And trees about my window sill.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TO THE LIFEBOATS!

By Helen Bird

CONFUSION. Voices. Running.

I thought I was falling . . . falling . . . falling.

I opened my eyes. I was clinging tightly to the railing of the bed. The ship was listing terrifically.

I slipped on a kimono and slippers and ran to the door. In the corridor I saw standing tense and white-faced the night watchman and the woman who had the cabin next to mine.

"Is the ship going to sink?" I asked.

"I think we'd better dress," said the woman with a chill in her voice.

With some vague thought that one should dress warm for a wreck I put on a wool dress and coat and in preparedness for a Robinson Crusoe episode and scaling a cocoanut tree I put on heavy oxfords.

As I snatched a handful of hairpins from the shelf, where powder was spilling and cold cream was tipped over, I looked at my watch. One minute to twelve. Half an hour since I had gone to bed.

Every day since I had boarded the ship in New York I had read as I closed my door:

"In case of emergency your lifeboat is Number 1."

I jerked at the life-preserver on the shelf above the bed and felt that I was being unduly hysterical. It toppled down heavily. I picked it up wondering if my life was actually to depend on that band of canvas and cork.

My suitcases were sliding across the floor. Dresses were tumbling out of the wardrobe.

I thought of my Phi Beta Kappa key, of the diamond locket my fiancé had given me when I had left him in Chicago less than a month before. But I didn't stop to open the suitcase they were in.

I snatched up my purse, wondering if I would ever need any money again, and ran down the corridor dragging my life-preserver apologetically behind me. After all, I thought, ships don't really sink.

The stairs were perpendicular with the list and I fell to my knees as the ship lurched farther over. . . . I clung to the banister and pulled myself to my feet.

Standing at the door was a Stanford student I had danced with earlier in the evening. Green pajamas were sticking out at the wrists and ankles of his blue suit.

"What's the matter?" I asked, attempting to look placid as if it were customary for every one to dash up on deck at midnight with life-preservers.

He pointed out into the blackness.

There, even blacker than the night and ominously close, rose rocky cliffs.

"Do you want this on?" he said, picking up my life-preserver.

"I suppose so," I said.

The lifeboats were swinging out from the boat deck. The *Colombia's* whistle was crying, the most forsaken, hopeless cry I had ever heard.

The passengers were all on deck in various stages of attire from pajamas and negligées to complete street dress. One man had even put on a necktie.

The captain appeared.

"Everybody get life-preservers and warm coats. It will be cold out there."

Out there. The words sank into my brain like cold steel.

I looked *out there.*

"Your lifeboat is one. . . . Your lifeboat is one." The words kept racing through my mind.

There were girls with their mothers, women with children. Thank God I'm alone, I thought.

Some one led a Mexican woman, who was carrying a tiny, dark-eyed baby, to me.

"Tell her where to get a life-preserver."

My mind was numb. I couldn't think of the Spanish word for "above."

"La cama!" I cried, gesticulating wildly to express the idea of above. The woman looked confused. Suddenly the word shot into my brain.

"Sobre la cama! El estante sobre la cama."

The woman nodded, understanding.

I saw the purser, his face chalk white, dragging the mail sacks across the deck.

Creaking of winches. Grinding of ropes. The first lifeboat was at the rail. The chief steward was supervising the loading of the boat. I looked at my watch. Twelve twenty-five.

"Women and children first," the captain's order was hoarse and staccato.

The steward's hand was at my elbow assisting me to climb onto a deck chair and over the rail into the boat.

A young sailor standing in the boat took my hand and dragged me in, then started to give me the babies the steward was handing him. Babies. Babies. Babies. I had never seen them on the ship before. The boat was crowded. I put the babies on the floor.

The sailor was counting the passengers in the boat.

"Two, four, six, eight," he shouted, counting up to forty.

Tales of overcrowded lifeboats flashed over my mind . . . the *Vestris* . . . I was alone, the only woman on the ship who was alone. It didn't matter where or how I died.

"Do you want me to get out?" I said to the sailor.

"Stay where you are!" he cried.

Creaking of winches. Grinding of ropes.

The boat was tipping and jerking, sinking down into black emptiness. Then it caught on the side of the listing *Colombia.*

The ship's lights went out.

The sailors were struggling with the oars trying to pry the boat away from the ship. It swung out and the bow dropped several feet below the stern. We hung tilted in midair expecting to be dumped out into the blackness.

"Hold everything! Hold everything!" shrieked a sailor, waving a flashlight.

Above us flashing torches and moving shapes marked the level of the deck.

Then somehow the boat touched the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

water, floated, and was dashed against the black wall of the *Colombia*.

The sailors were trying to brace the ends of the oars against the ship. I remember in an irrelevant moment looking up at the black sky and seeing a star fall—and thinking of the superstition that a falling star means death.

I looked up. Over our heads was a descending lifeboat. In sudden flashes of torchlight I saw rather than heard women shriek.

Our young sailor was on his feet, waving a flashlight, shrieking wildly:

"Hold that boat! Hold that boat!"

A madness of shrieks and screams. Over everything the quavering groan of the whistle.

I wondered at what second the *Colombia* was going to crash over and hurl us all into space, what sensations I would have at the sight and sound of that crash.

Still above us was that boat . . . coming down . . . coming down. . . .

I'm going to die tonight, I thought, but I don't want to be crushed under a boat. No . . . dear God . . . drowning is not bad—painless—but to be crushed . . .

Somehow we cleared the ship. I looked back at it. It was listing wofully. Lifeboats were sailing out from the port side, their lanterns flickering pathetically in the black immensity of sky and sea.

"Get these babies out of the way, somebody. I've got to have room here. . . ."

The young sailor beside me was struggling to get the heavy oar in place. Already I was cramped, babies on my feet, on my lap, hanging to my neck, leaning against my arms. I tugged at one on the floor. It was a Mexican child, and I urged it in Spanish, thinking at the time that it probably didn't understand my brand of Spanish. It remained impervious to both my Spanish and my tugging.

The sailor clambered over the babies and reached a lantern from the bottom of the boat.

"Matches," he cried.

I heard my own voice cry startlingly, "Matches!"

Some one passed some matches. The lantern was lit. The light looked good.

The sob of the *Colombia's* whistle faded out like a death-cry.

Then we heard the captain's voice, torn into fragments by the wind, float out from the ship.

"S. O. S. . . . United Fruit boat . . . rescue . . . six . . ."

A ride in a lifeboat is unlike any other ride in the world. It is a fiendish combination of all the giddy torments of a carnival. It is being set on an infinitesimal, fragile splinter of wood and mocked, laughed at, and tortured by all the gods of the sea.

Waves battered and buffeted the boat. The sailors were rowing desperately to keep off the rocks. We were thrown up into the air, then suddenly dropped down into an abyss.

Every one was hanging over the side of the boat vomiting agonizingly.

The boat bounced up and down as if it were suspended on springs. It tipped, tilted, rocked, dipped, lurched, swayed, pitched, performed every acrobatic feat known to a boat except to capsize.

O God, I thought, let me lie naked on those black rocks . . . let me lie . . . but stop this mad dipping. . . .

A sudden flash of red enveloped the *Colombia*. Was it going over now? It was lit up, lurid, ghostly, a phantom ship.

"They're trying to signal a passing ship," explained a sailor.

A woman had fainted, struck by an oar. Some one had brought some brandy.

My chin rested on the edge of the life-preserver.

"O my God!"

I had been unconscious. I lifted my head at the cry.

"The boat's leaking. . . ."

"Hell!"

"Bail it out!"

The boat's going to founder, I thought. In a few minutes we will be in the water . . . but it won't hurt . . . I won't be conscious. I was dully aware that far, far away, back in the world—the world of light and warmth and safety—where one was not tortured and churned and flung about perpetually, there would be tears, because I had died. I'm glad I'm not married, I thought. . . . He will find another girl. . . . My father and mother have my brothers . . . and that is all so far away—in life . . . and this is death.

"What time is it?" some one said.

"Three o'clock."

The *Colombia* was sending up rockets, one shower of light after another.

The sea was calmer.

The sailors rested their oars and lit cigarettes.

The sea was calm, except for ominous floppings in the water.

"Sharks," some one breathed.

Sharks, I thought. I don't mind being drowned but I object to being eaten by a shark.

"Chiquita, chiquita," murmured the Mexican woman, trying to calm her crying baby.

"Señora, señora," she kept saying, and I finally grasped the idea that she wanted me to hold one baby while she nursed another. I dragged the child on my knees, never understanding how such a small child could be so heavy.

The woman kept jabbering unintelligible Spanish. My nerves were raw. I thought I couldn't stand another word.

"Don't talk to me. I don't know anything," I cried in Spanish and was shocked at my unkindness.

I recovered from another lapse of consciousness—unconsciousness is such a blessing—and heard some one say, "Four o'clock."

There was no sight of the *Colombia*. I wondered if it had gone down.

I thought, as we watched the horizon for lights, of the survivors of the *Titanic* watching for the *Carpathia*.

A lifeboat sent up a red flare.

"Row over there. I'm going to see what they want," said the officer in command of our boat.

I was straining my ears in the dread expectation of hearing screams. Was the boat foundering? What had happened to the other boats?

The sailors, exhausted from their hours of struggle with the sea, tried to row to the boat. They couldn't make it. The officer shouted. No answer. No cry. No sound.

The east grew gray and pink and white. Then through the western mists we saw lights, lights in the outline of a ship. . . .

It was ten minutes to five.

"Row! Hell, come on! Row!"

"Let's get together, now *row!*"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But our exhausted sailors could make little impression on the distance between us and the ship. And the current was against them. We threw our life-preservers away to lighten the boat. Finally, the *San Mateo,* taking soundings as it came, sailed toward us.

At six we were dragged up the steps of the ship, a freighter of the United Fruit Company. The purser of the *Colombia* was bustling around, listing names and addresses as we stepped on deck. We, all the women and children of the *Colombia,* were the last lifeboat to be picked up.

Some one thrust a cup of coffee into my hands. I couldn't drink it. Some one else spread a handkerchief on a pipe for me to sit on. This attention was pathetic —my once white dress was black. Every one was smeared from hair to heels with oil, grease, and vomit. Our usually immaculate men and women were unrecognizable, Palm Beach suits and pajamas alike oil-streaked, and faces without benefit of powder or razor.

But we could stand up. We could walk. We were alive—every one.

I was trembling, crying, laughing. . . . I put my hands up to my face and thought, I'm getting hysterical. . . . I can't get hysterical. . . .

Breakfast was being served in the officers' mess. I sat down at a table, looked at a dish of bananas, and then went out on deck again.

At the door stood a man who said to me:

"Lady, if you want to lay down, you can have my room—I work all day."

This man, an engineer of the *San Mateo,* gave me a towel, a comb, and a blanket. I climbed up into the berth and looked out the porthole. There was the black rocky coast, the sea strewn with life-preservers, and the poor, wounded *Colombia,* leaning on the water, her decks now dipping under the ocean.

After a while I knew I had to send radiograms to my parents and fiancé. I wanted them to know I was safe before they were shocked by the newspapers, and I did not want them to know the *Colombia* was wrecked until they could know the details. After considerable deliberation I composed the message, "Safe. Frisco-bound."

The *San Mateo* was southbound. We were to be transferred to her northbound sister ship, the *La Perla.* All day we lay in Magdalena Bay. About eight o'clock the *La Perla* arrived.

A doctor's wife and I were assigned an engineer's cabin. I took off my coat, dress, and slippers, I climbed up into the berth and spread my dress and coat over me. I had no sheet or blanket.

The next morning I got up, put on my dress and slippers. How simple! I didn't have to brush my teeth, to powder or rouge.

Promenading the deck of the *La Perla* I saw a girl in red pajamas, white felt hat, pearl earrings, men's socks, and high-heeled shoes. One man tied his bedroom slippers on with ropes in Greek style. A woman who had escaped in coat and nightgown made a dress out of the lining of the coat and a hat from the belt and pockets. Thirteen men shaved with one razor blade. The one passenger possessing a nail file allowed others to use it under her surveillance.

An icy wind was blowing off the mountains of Lower California. We shivered. The *Colombia's* radio operator gave me a pair of socks.

Monday afternoon the *Colombia's* sister ship, the *Salvador,* passed us. Her passengers sent over donations of blankets and clothing, most of which was masculine.

To the men, who had slept in the dining-room, engine-room, and on deck under papers, canvas, and life-preservers, the blankets were especially welcome. Any one who was fortunate enough to get one carried it around with him all day to be sure of having it at night.

Wednesday morning I awoke and looked out the porthole. We were at San Pedro.

I received a telegram addressed, "Miss Helen Bird, survivor S.S. *Colombia.* Arriving S.S. *La Perla,* Los Angeles." I felt suddenly tearful. I was a survivor!

We had to fill out customs declarations: I, citizen of the United States, sailed from New York, August 20, 1931, aboard the S.S. *Colombia,* arrived at San Pedro, September 16, 1931, aboard the S.S. *La Perla,* et cetera. Luggage, 0.

The ship docked. Cameras were clicking and grinding. I walked down the gangplank, sans hat, sans gloves, sans luggage. . . . Survivor.

Next Month — or Later

YANKEE COTTON PLANTER *by Grace M. Neely*

LADY BOOTLEGGER — *Anonymous*

Two stories of adventure—true narratives of "Life in the United States"—one the story of a Northern woman who became a cotton planter in the South and the other of a woman well known in society who became a bootlegger and drove a high-powered liquor car between New York and Pittsburgh.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in world affairs to-day

AN EPISTLE TO PACIFISTS

By Albert Guérard

THE cause of peace is in danger of failing once more, not because the Bellicists are strong, but because the Pacifists are weak. They are weak, not in purpose, not in information, not in wealth and number: they are weak because they are divided. They are leading the crusade for international peace on a nationalistic basis. They are for or against national entities like France or Germany rather than for or against measures and ideals. "Peace workers of all countries, unite!" It is to my fellow-pacifists in America, and to no others, that the present epistle is addressed.

First of all, do not strive to placate the isolationists. Isolation is a dream. A beautiful dream if you like: grant me the noun, we shall not quarrel about the adjective. The most hidebound isolationist is compelled to think internationally. We build battleships, not for our own pleasure, but to match or dominate others. Without any signed agreement our armament policy would still be determined in London and Tokyo as well as in Washington.

World peace is entirely a matter of faith—and good faith. I am unreservedly in favor of disarmament: but disarmament is a side issue. England and America have the most powerful navies in the world: yet a war between them is practically inconceivable. On the other hand, disarm Poland as well as Germany without creating a faith in peace, a will-to-peace: war would still be impending. Talk of "aggressive *weapons*"! There are only aggressive *men*. Men will fight with bare fists, with cudgels, with kitchen knives. Frightfulness existed under Genghis Khan. An industrial nation can beat its plowshares into swords overnight. Commercial planes can be used for bombing; chemical works can be turned into death factories. Trust and friendliness alone will give you what battleships and tanks only promise, and fail to deliver; what the mere absence of them will not provide either: a feeling of *security*. Security is the key word of civilization. A country in which law-abiding citizens feel secure is civilized. A world in which law-abiding nations feel secure is civilized. The alternative is barbarism.

The demand for security is not therefore the result of selfish, hysterical, craven fear: it is the desire of every rational being. Security is not a material apparatus; it is not a legal system; it is a state of mind. And once more its only foundation is confidence.

Now, we convene costly disarmament conferences with the definitely stated policy that we distrust all other nations; that we absolutely refuse to join their permanent organizations; that we intend to remain, at all times, a law unto ourselves. What is the result? Simply that, through our prestige and power, we are spreading our own gospel: not peace, not disarmament, but uncompromising nationalism. We take the lead in so-called disarmament, and are still unable to join the World Court, even with the innumerable reservations which are, one and all, declarations of distrust. We are preaching and practising the good old nationalistic doctrine: "America first!" And the echoes respond: "Deutschland über alles!"—"Sacro egoismo!"—"France d'abord!"—"Britannia, rule the waves!"—"Sinn Fein!" It can be sung in all languages, including Japanese and even Esperanto. It may be magnificent, but it is not peace.

So our finest professions, whilst undeniably sincere, do not ring quite true. It takes no cynic to remark that we are willing to scrap land armaments, of which we have no need, provided we retain "a navy second to none." We support the claims of Italy and Germany to parity with France: we have shown no eagerness to propose that France or Japan should enjoy parity with ourselves. In disarming, we want to remain armed—a little better than the next fellow. Naturally enough: since we refuse to trust the law, we must still put our faith in our own right arm. Good Bismarckism; good Clemenceauism. But the Iron Chancellor and the Old Tiger were frank: let us not pose as though we alone had the words of eternal peace.

When we are ready to renounce the law of the jungle, absolute independence, our fellow men will trust us, and trust one another. Then, and not before. Our example, so far, is the worst obstacle to a commonwealth of nations: we are not Andorra, and the world cannot move without us. Our theses are finding sympathy and support at Geneva, no doubt: because the present conference is an old-fashioned diplomatic congress, in which rival nations are jockeying for position. Unwittingly perhaps, we have taken sides. We are helping one European bloc at the expense of another. With our boasted horror of entanglements, we are juggling with the European balance of power. Mr. Stimson may bring us a "victory" scored by "our allies" against "our adversaries": he will take his place in the line of Metternich, Talleyrand, Bismarck, Disraeli, Bülow. It is a great game: but is it peace?

Can we not see that any disarmament convention shall remain the merest scrap of paper, unless there be some deep-seated respect for international law back of it? Any law is a bond: our own anarchical desire for unqualified independence must be repressed. Shall we tie our hands in the most vital of all our national concerns, viz. national defense, yet proclaim that we cannot and shall not give up a particle of our "sacred egoism"? Nationalism justifies and almost necessitates war: peace implies a higher law.

But "a higher law"—be ready to shudder—means "the super-state." We cannot entertain the notion, because, for one thing, our present attitude is *American*, and therefore right; whilst the opposite thesis, being *French*, must be wrong. The fallacy is obvious—*French*, the Parliament of Man, the Fed-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eration of the World of the Victorian laureate? French, the *League to Enforce Peace* of Taft and Lowell, the Covenant with articles X and XVI of Woodrow Wilson, endorsed by such men as Hughes, Hoover, J. B. Scott, J. T. Shotwell? The League, an American idea, was wrecked on the rocks of American politics. We did not reject it because we disapproved of the Versailles Treaty: in 1920, we were more blindly anti-German than the French, and our separate peace repeated the principal clauses of Versailles, *war guilt included*. No: we rejected it because Wilson linked up the fate of the League with that of a minority party, worn threadbare by eight strenuous years in office. "America," not co-extensive with Messrs. Hearst and Hiram Johnson, has never rejected the League: "America" has never expressed her opinion on the subject, disentangled from personal and partisan animosities, from the tariff issue, from religious or racial prejudices, from prohibition, from prosperity. . . .

Tardieu's proposals for an international army went to the root of the matter. Material power is not the law: but it is the symbol of our faith in the law. These proposals were branded—by liberals!—as "utopian" and insincere. Utopian? The expedition against the Boxers, under Waldersee, shows that an international army is not unthinkable. Insincere? But the same opponents of France also claimed that Tardieu's policy was meant to perpetuate France's supremacy in Europe. If this be the case, his move, shrewd or clumsy, patriotic or selfish, as you please, would at any rate be sincere.

Now I understand our refusal to underwrite France's hegemony. Supremacy means subjection of the weaker, within a certain area; defiance to all comers without. It is imperialism; it needs force, and spells war. Down with every claim to supremacy then—French or German supremacy in *Mittel-Europa,* English supremacy on the seven seas, Japanese supremacy in the Far East, American supremacy in the western hemisphere! But supposing Tardieu had had his wicked way; supposing we had put our whole strength at the service of law and order, even in Central Europe: would that have made France supreme?

Exactly the reverse: for the Allies of France are in her political system only because she guarantees their national existence. She has absolutely no means of coercion over them: if they were dissatisfied with her leadership, they would simply drop her alliance. If France's responsibility were shifted to the United States of Europe or to the world at large, her only claim to hegemony would disappear.

"But the 'law and order' that France wants to maintain are the embodiment of injustice. Whether defended by France alone, by France and her satellites, by Briand's United States of Europe, by Tardieu's international police, by an 'implemented Kellogg Pact,' by 'a League with teeth,' the existing order would remain unjust, and we refuse to commit ourselves to its perpetuation." Granting for the moment that the map of Europe as drawn in 1919 is worse than in 1914: yet the nations have sworn, of their own free will, through the Locarno and Kellogg agreements, not to seek redress *through war*. This is not craven resignation, but wisdom born of tragic experience. *Never again!* Whatever may be the discomfort, the injustice of the present situation, they cannot be so cruel or so unjust as even a righteous and triumphant war. And it does not take a war to end injustice. Had the Boers been encouraged to prepare for a war of revenge, they would not have wrested the whole of South Africa from British domination. The treaties of 1919 have already been repeatedly modified. It is the threat of violence that hardens them: in an atmosphere of peace, they would become far more plastic.

If we want peace, let us keep the peace—the only peace we have. A poor thing perhaps: yet far better than the most epic slaughter. Readjustment will follow: but peace is more precious than readjustment. Our pacifists have been constantly encouraging the Nazis at the expense of those Germans whose first desire was democracy and international reconciliation. They have been aiding and abetting the men who would start a new war, in order to wash themselves of the accusation that they started the last one. Their plea for lopping off Polish provinces is a plea for "just one more war."

If we had a world police, it would, automatically, set out against any breaker of the peace. To this, Mr. Stimson objects most strenuously. "Our attitude toward an aggressor must depend upon public opinion in this country in any case." *Condemn the aggressor* is easily said; *define the aggressor* is not so easily done. Was it England, was it Napoleon, that broke the peace of Amiens? Scholars are squabbling about the origins of the Great War.

The problem, however, is far simpler than diplomatic quibbling makes it out to be. *War guilt* is an elusive concept: *aggression* is a plain fact—far easier to define than "aggressive weapons." The party found transgressing on the wrong side of the boundary line is in the wrong. To ward off accidents, in times of diplomatic tension, *withdraw*. Do not fire the first shot: if there were no first shot, there would be no war. The country that crosses the line, refuses mediation, arbitration, judgment, is the aggressor. Should Poland send troops into East Prussia, or Germany into the Corridor, we need not let our action wait upon "public opinion"—the welter of American politics, the tussle of rival interests, the raging conflict of propaganda: in either case, the fact of aggression would be plain.

Finally, certain ardent pacifists tell us: "Force is force, war is war: the wars to end war are the worst. Your world police would not be transcending the old gospel of coercion, the creed of the bully. A peace imposed by an army, were it an international army, is no peace."

True enough: it would be better if all law-breakers could be restrained by gentle reproof; better still if they were checked by the sensitiveness of their own conscience. There will be no police force under the millennium. Meanwhile, if we have armaments at all, let them be at the service, not of the contending parties, but of the law. Have we not renounced war as an instrument of national policy? Let all armaments go, by all means, even those of the world commonwealth: but national armaments must be the first to go.

I am a Frenchman by birth, an American by choice, a cosmopolitan by experience, an internationalist by conviction. In thus affirming my faith, I do

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not believe I am forfeiting my Americanism. To Decatur's "My country, right or wrong!" I am free to oppose Garrison's "My country is the world, my countrymen are all mankind." The America I sought was one that had liberated herself from the snobbish aristocracies, the class hatreds, the petty nationalisms of Europe: not one whose sole ideal would be to ape the narrowest prejudices of the old world. The American creed never was "Ourselves alone!" The United States of America should herald and not hinder the united states of the world.

IN DEFENSE OF THE HAPPY HOME

By Catharine Morris Wright

It appears to be good taste to speak of your troubles; a forbidden thing to mention your delights. Many people are voicing their personal unhappinesses in the magazines these days. I shall venture the violation of a taboo and tell how one happy family lives. There are plenty of homes where content and good will are taken for granted; where men love their wives, and mothers their children. And they're not dull either.

My husband and I both derive from Englishmen who migrated here in the early sixteen hundreds. These were largely merchants and shippers, belonging to that responsible social stratum which has enough worldly goods to be independent, but not enough to grow satiated. To that same stratum my husband and I belong today. We are happy, and surely we have everything to make us so; each other, our children, work, friends, and home.

My husband is, as his sister once wrote me, "always thoughtful and always cheerful"; but that doesn't prevent his getting as angry as any one, if necessary; and anger is necessary—I couldn't admire a person who lacked it. But my husband's anger is anger for cause always. He never nags—why should he? I enjoy doing what he wants, and our tastes in general are similar. I myself get mad five or six times a day. When the dogs lose their lunches on the parlor rug; or the children break Grandma Jones's wedding tea-pot, a really strenuous God-damn saves the occasion.

My husband is a Ph.D. in chemistry, engaged in research and teaching in the medical school of the university. He also writes, takes care of his mother's estate; oversees our farm; is trustee of a large scientific institute; and edits its small magazine. I am by profession an artist, and paint every minute I can; and when I'm sick, or too weak to paint, I rest and write; though I have painted, after one of my babies was born, lying on my back with the canvas on my stomach, against my knees. I don't bother with the technicalities of my husband's work, nor does he with mine, but we are both interested in each other's efforts and accomplishments.

We both like simple living embroidered by sophistication in the right place. We like to go to bed reasonably early, unless we are at a party. Then we stay to the bitter end, and the later the better. We aren't sleepless because our health is normal, and neither of us worries. If a child is sick, we leave our door open so as to hear him in case he calls. We get up as late as possible. It's tonic to the spirit to doze half awake in the morning. After breakfast I get my oldest child off to school, and the others outdoors, and my husband motors to the university. Then when I have arranged my household and engagements I am free for my own work.

I lunch with the children, and it's fun! We all tell stories, and even sing sometimes—impolite but pleasant—and after lunch we romp, with lots of yells, to let off the steam of table manners. Then, if it's not my day as nurse, I am again free.

My husband usually gets home in time to kiss the children good night. At supper we both read. Often we don't speak a word to each other during the entire meal.

In the evening, if we're alone, we sing, or write, or lie on the lawn and weed, in summer. Life is peaceful, interrupted by excitements which are constantly being provided gratis. There was the murder in our lane; the armored police cars sweeping our fields with their searchlights for the corpse, thinking he had crawled away from his blood-filled cart to die here; and the fire engines pumping out our quarry, dragging for the body. We've had drunken bootleggers at midnight; and naked men swimming in our little pond; skunks in the cellar—"Mama, what is a stunk?" asked my little boy—and there is always the cow getting out, or the neighbor's bull getting in, not to mention the embarrassing questions our two eldest, aged four and five, put to the hired man.

How can one be blue when this sort of occurrence is hourly?

My husband and I love parties of every variety. The fascination of a good party is its way of absolving you from all responsibility. I'm no longer wife, mother, or artist, but just an unattached entity, enjoying myself, and so is my husband. I like wearing my most daring dress, dancing, and flirting. Sometimes I flirt with my husband—he's good at it—sometimes with other men. I've gone to a dance with the worst tummyache in the world. I always come home cured.

Men feel just the same about being attractive to women; and to my mind, a little flirtation is a wholesome thing. If you love your husband or wife you don't get into anything heavy. That's so depressing, and gets to be a nuisance. Nor do you want to annex your friends' husbands. Most of them you'd find completely incompatible if you had to live with them.

We only like movies and plays enough to go if we are invited; but we love the orchestra, and after it's over often go on a bat: to a speakeasy for dancing and beer, or one of the musician's houses for smoking and whiskey; sometimes merely to a drug store for chatter and soda. We don't attend lectures—when we go out we want gaiety. I don't like bridge; and my husband likes it in a casual way, so we

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

play occasionally. But always we like anything that has to do with the country—swimming, walking, gardening, bicycling.

Of course we drink. But I have never seen one of our friends objectionably drunk. We were brought up to be decent in drinking as in eating, and we know how. Liquor is taken as much for granted among ladies and gentlemen now as it was fifty years ago, and will be fifty years hence.

We have four children: a girl, five, a boy, four; and twin boys of three. They are healthy, jolly little things. They have companionship among themselves. We rarely discuss their upbringing. Punishment consists in serious talk, and they usually show common sense and understand. If not, they sit in a corner; and if worse comes to worst they are spanked; but usually we try to uncover the cause of the misbehavior and remedy that. My little girl said once, after being admonished to tell me the next day that she hadn't repeated a certain objectionable action, "Well, you see, Mama, I'm the kind of a girl that I might come and tell you I didn't when I did." I said lightly, "But that would be terrible, old girl"; and changed the subject. The naughtiness was never repeated. We meet each crisis as it comes, and deal with it, sometimes peremptorily; sometimes by letting it be forgotten, as the case demands.

I am agnostic and feel strongly against church. My husband is Episcopalian and doesn't attend church; but if he ever wants the children to go, or they want to, they shall go, for all me. I believe each one's religion is personal, that he must learn all he can about it, and then decide for himself.

Our friends are varied: my school friends and my husband's; his college friends, my art-school chums; his medical and chemical confrères; my art and poetry intimates; the society crowd we were born into, and last but not least the just "friends" of all kinds that we have made together, as a unit. But all of these have one bond in common, happy, well-running homes and families; thoughtful, conscientious, and gay lives. Practically all have children and most of them one or more maids. Of course they have worries. Several of them have recently lost babies; and all have lost money. But they have been brought up to take what comes and make the most of it.

Our home is a rambling farm house, with a huge barn, where we have "cops and robbers" parties on Sunday afternoons; and several outhouses, on about fifty acres of fields and woods. There are four maids—cook, waitress, chambermaid, and nurse; a farmer and hired man; a laundress who comes three days a week, and a seamstress who comes one day. In trying to help unemployment we feel that keeping people in jobs and giving people jobs is of primary importance, so we have done all we could. About one-third of our income goes to the employees in salaries.

Of course, it took time to mould the household to suit us. Five years ago I took care of the baby, made my own and her clothes, and had one all-round maid. We didn't lack for amusing crises. One girl left because I shined the brasses. She'd never been in a place before where the lady shined the brasses, and there was something queer about it! There was one who tried to knife the others. She suddenly developed a neat way of throwing it at them across the kitchen. I remember going downstairs to fire her, the victims having fled aloft for safety, and all this before breakfast. "Mrs. Wright, I'm sorry for you!" said Sara, feelingly, as I went down the back stairs. But I don't mind firing a bit, when it's necessary.

About another third of our income keeps up the house and place, and feeds the eleven members of our household. We get as much provender as possible from the farm—eggs, milk, chickens, and vegetables. For the rest we deal at local stores. Then, we clothe six of us; no mean item.

Aside from this we have no large expenses. We each belong to a good intellectual club, but no country club. We run two old cars, and so far have only one school bill.

Our live stock consists of cocker spaniels, cow, calf, horse, chickens, and rabbits. Daisy, the horse, paid for herself at once. She is small and shy, and we all ride her bareback. She does ploughing, hauling, cultivating, and she and the wagon and three sets of harness cost forty dollars!

An eighty-dollar cow pays for herself in two months, considering the forty dollar a month milk bill we pay. God willing, she keeps on for several years, costing almost nothing. God hasn't seen fit to be willing yet, in our case, but animal rearing has the fascination of gambling—one is always hopeful. Of our four cows to date, one got T. B.; one contagious abortion; one ate barbed wire; and this one won't breed. When Daisy, the horse, first came this affectionate and jealous bovine was so upset she wouldn't eat for three days! How can any one, with a sense of humor at all, be blue or complaining when there are such things to laugh at? I've gone out at midnight in a cold March wind, after finally getting a feverish baby to sleep, to mend a leak in the cow's water pipe so she could lie down without being sprayed by cold water. I've helped give the calf Epsom salts—five pounds of it, I think it was—when its tummy was upset. I've wormed and deloused dogs many and many a time; and how we laugh over these things afterwards, and how we love it all! It's easy to cultivate the habit of liking things.

So, there's my picture. You'll say, "Why shouldn't she be happy?" Just what I think! But the majority of people whose sob articles I've read and raged over had pleasant surroundings too. Their troubles weren't physical, but psychological. They, or their husbands or families, weren't adjusted. Piffle! Nobody's adjusted at the start. The baby has to get adjusted to life itself. One of the happiest people I know is my aunt, who has lain on her back for nearly thirty years. Subtly, through the struggle to make the most of one's own raw material, comes satisfaction, comes character.

Don't say I'm not an average person. My class is as average as any other class—as the salesman living in the modest brick row, or the immigrant in his slum. The United States is full of people of our average income and social status and lineage and upbringing. But because of a feeling against personal publicity fostered by that upbringing, and because its members are too busy to talk about it, this class I belong to doesn't express itself, or approve of having itself expressed in print. My own kind will probably regard me with horror for thus baring my existence to the public eye. Let them! I'm tired of seeing nothing in the magazines but the morbid, the sordid, the psychopathic.

Here's a toast to wholesome, gay, intelligent living; and I'm proud to be the one to give it!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AS I LIKE IT – *William Lyon Phelps*

It is with surprise and delight that I salute the first book by a young British novelist, R. C. Hutchinson. He is a university graduate, still in the twenties; but he commands a literary style intellectually mature and full of artistic resources. This new novel of 1932 is called "The Answering Glory" and has a heroine who knows how to put up a good fight. She is a foreign missionary!

Imagine what the average modern novelist or playwright would do with a Protestant foreign missionary, and then, if you enjoy the sensation of agreeable amazement, read this book. It is full of exciting adventure; it has living characters; its power of description is startling; and it stirs the heart like the sound of a trumpet.

For the heroine, who meets appalling dangers and difficulties with high-hearted gaiety, is a Christian. The foremost Christian virtues, as supremely exemplified in the Founder, are self-sacrifice and courage. One of the reasons why the religion of Nationalism is so much more popular than the religion of the Church, is because the cardinal virtues of the soldier are self-sacrifice and courage. This is why—at the outbreak of a war—thousands of young men joyfully leave all the comforts of home, and eagerly try all the steps of the Dance of Death. For there is this magnificent quality in men and women; they love comfort and security, but they love adventure even more. There has never been a time when millions of men and women would not throw away their lives for a Cause.

Thus the present indifference and apathy toward Protestant church-membership is not the fault of young men and women; they would enlist in the army of the Church if it appealed to their sense of danger or sacrifice or adventure. In the first two centuries the scattered individuals who embraced Christianity succeeded in organizing and then conquering the whole Roman Empire. They took the Cross, a symbol of degradation and ignominy, and made it a sign of victory.

Well, there are plenty of individual Christian heroes and heroines today, and I have had the good fortune to meet many of them. There are pastors of churches in remote communities, who, on a microscopic salary, cheerfully carry on, give their children the best possible education, and are as truly a daily blessing to their neighborhood as was Chaucer's Poor Parson or Goldsmith's Village Preacher. Then there are individual foreign medical missionaries, the frontiersmen of the faith, who, under terrific hardships, bring to humble sufferers bodily healing and spiritual elevation.

"The Answering Glory" is a novel. It is not a tract; it is not propaganda. It is a work of literary art. But it is the special merit of the young author to have seen and held up for public recognition the truth that a woman whose errand in foreign countries is one of health and hope is surely as much an exemplification of courage as a man whose errand is destruction.

The songs of the Church are certainly as inspiring as any national anthems. I often feel a sense of shame as I sit comfortably in a church pew between breakfast and dinner, and join in the singing of

"Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free:
How sweet would be their children's fate,
If, they, like them, could die for thee!"

Or,

"A glorious band, the chosen few
On whom the Spirit came,
Twelve valiant saints, their hope they knew,
And mocked the cross and flame."

Or,

"Christian dost thou see them
On the holy ground,
How the powers of darkness
Rage thy steps around?
Christian! up and smite them,
Counting gain but loss:
In the strength that cometh
By the holy cross."

Or,

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride."

No, there is nothing wrong with the Leader, or with the Cause, or with the Songs of Battle.

Furthermore, in this remarkable novel the heroine is in many respects a commonplace woman. She has no great talent, no beauty, no charm, and finally no health. But she has *the will to win*. She is indomitable, single-minded, insatiable. The greater the danger, the more overwhelming the odds, the more she rejoices; she loves with all her heart a real fight.

Thousands should read this book. Even those who have no religious faith will be glad to see that there are some persons left in the world who are of courage all compact. They show the highest possibilities of humanity.

Turning from spiritual warfare to fisticuffs, I recommend an excellent book by William O. Inglis, called "Champions Off Guard." It is illustrated with portraits of prize-fighters and of scenes in the ring; and the frontispiece shows Theodore Roosevelt engaged in a furious battle with Mike Donovan. Roosevelt is leading for the solar plexus, but Mike has him stopped. Separate chapters are devoted to John L. Sullivan, the king of fighters, and a philosopher as well; one of the few champions who wanted to fight every day. His eyes were as terrible as his fists; even those who met him casually were awed if he chanced to look at them. "The Magic of Jim Corbett" describes the most accomplished boxer who ever lived. I remember just before his combat with Sullivan, the Reverend Doctor Lyman Abbott saying that this was a fight between two men, one of whom could strike a blow as quick as thought and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the other being the only man in the world who could dodge that blow. He did not approve of there being universal excitement over such a matter; but it seems to me quite interesting and it had the additional merit of being true. Mr. Corbett now is an authority on health, and is doing excellent work in giving Americans good advice. Another chapter is on Mike Donovan and Roosevelt. "Late in the afternoon of the day before his inauguration as President, Mr. Roosevelt boxed ten fast rounds with Mike Donovan." Another chapter deals with "Bob Fitzsimmons, Hypnotist," the most awkward man that ever entered a ring. "The menace of the icy gleam in Fitz's blue eyes hypnotized his victims." Kid McCoy has a brief chapter and then comes "Jeffries, the Gentle Grizzly." I never saw a prize-fight, but those elderly people who saw the extremely cautious exchange of pats and taps between Sharkey and Schmeling must have been disgusted as they remembered that terrible contest, when Jeffries and Sharkey fought twenty-five rounds. At the close of the fight both men were ready to go on; but Sharkey was so damaged that he was never again the same man.

No chapters are awarded to Johnson or to Willard, the last two being reserved for "Dempsey the Dynamiter" and Gene Tunney, the most intelligent of ring champions, who wrote the article on boxing for the latest edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica. When he was on the island of Brioni, both Bernard Shaw and Richard Strauss came there not merely to see him, but to walk and talk with him every day for weeks.

The popularity of Dempsey makes one despise public opinion. I can remember when I was apparently the only man in America who hoped he would defeat Carpentier. I wanted him to win both because I thought he was the better fighter and because if he lost the United States of America would wallow in a nauseating morass of sentimentality over the fascinating Frenchman. Then Dempsey was an object of universal execration; now he is the most popular fighter in the world.

Mr. Inglis is not only an admirable sports writer; he has known personally and boxed with all these heroes he describes. I am sorry for any man who could read his chapter on "The Mighty Sullivan" without being thrilled. It is the nearest approach to Boswell; and John L. deserved a Boswell. I would give a good deal to have all his *obiter dicta*.

Mr. Inglis's testimony is worth remembering: "I look back at the many champions I have known, and look around at the champions I know today, and say without hesitation that they are among the best men I have ever met. There are among the hangers-on of the game some shady adventurers; but the real fighting man as I know him is an honest lad of clean character, fine ideals, stout backbone and big heart."

Another highly interesting book on boxing is called "Fighting for Fun," and is written by Eddie Eagan, who, by winning the Olympic championships, became heavy-weight amateur champion of the world. This is his diary; with pardonable and disarming candor he recites the history of his ring battles from childhood up. Apart from his extraordinary success in boxing, it is the story of many an American boy, who by hard work and good habits and steadily flaming ambition, helped himself to a university education which, like many other prizes, lies open for those who have the fortitude to take it. This champion fighter is a graduate of three universities, Yale and Harvard and Oxford. The story of his battles is highly entertaining and at times thrilling; his match with Jack Dempsey is as vivid to the reader as it must have been to Eddie himself. Although these two books on pugilism were written by quite different men, Mr. Inglis's high tributes to the masters are well borne out by Mr. Eagan's personal experiences. Although the loss of a championship means everything to the defeated warrior and although its loss is accompanied by severe physical injuries, I wonder how many college professors could take a beating as well as the prize-fighter takes it or maintain so generous an attitude toward his successful antagonist.

Both these books are good reading not only for adults but for boys; the average boy longs to be *strong*. I am sure that many of my older male readers remember a book called "How to be Strong, and How to Stay So," by—wasn't his name William Blaikie? I remember reading that as a boy; for months I worked to improve my muscles and ran several miles every evening.

Those who are interested both in their own health and in the history of medicine will enjoy Doctor H. W. Haggard's copiously and quaintly illustrated volume "The Lame, the Halt, the Blind." He believes the history of civilization is really the history of physicians. He protests against history books being made up almost entirely of wars and political intrigues; your true hero is the doctor. Well, of course the history of medicine is just as full of superstitions as the history of religions; one reason why this book is so entertaining.

Sheila Kaye-Smith's new novel, "Summer Holiday," is a story of children; and those who like stories of children (and I do not) will enjoy this particularly, for it written with skill and with subtle understanding.

A. Wallis Myers, the veteran British expert writer on lawn tennis, and one of the best sports reporters in the world, has written a charming autobiography called "Memory's Parade." He has a fine chapter on Suzanne Lenglen, but he discusses many things besides tennis. Every professional writer on sport would do well to study this book.

Next month I shall devote considerable space to "This is Russia," a handsome illustrated volume of four hundred pages by George Earle Raiguel and William Kistler Huff. Let me say now that this is one of the books on the Great Experiment that everybody ought to read.

The first volume of "The Journal of Arnold Bennett" deals with the years from 1896 through 1910, and the reader will find something of interest on every page. A few weeks ago I was at Cambridge, England, talking with Arthur Goodhart, Fellow of Corpus Christi. He showed me a volume that he had bought from Bennett's library, recently sold. The bookplate had an engraved French inscription, "To be sold after my death." Did he mean that he wanted all his books converted into cash and not kept together in some institution? Did he believe that his widow would need the money? Anyhow, it was characteristic of his practical nature and interest in money. Furthermore, this copy happened to contain an autograph postcard that he wrote to his French wife

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shortly before the publication of "The Old Wives' Tale." It was postmarked *Bursley*. She was in France and he expressed the hope that she would be happy with him when they met again.

Harold E. Scarborough, London editorial manager for the New York *Herald Tribune,* has written an instructive book called "England Muddles Through." The constantly increasing number of books on England is not surprising, for I suppose it is the most interesting country in the world. Almost exactly the size of the State of Michigan, it has 45,000,000 people, a number of enormous cities, the loveliest countryside on earth, an amazing variety of scenery and climate, incomparable treasures of architecture—and with the one exception of ancient Athens, the highest type of human civilization that the world has ever seen. In almost every good thing except music, the English lead. Furthermore, in times of crisis, they are able to submerge partisan hostility in a union of the best minds for the public welfare. Mr. Scarborough has lived in England for a number of years and his point of view is that of an American who sees much to admire, much to consider, and a little to deplore.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, the foremost preacher in America, states his attitude toward Christianity clearly in a vigorous series of essays called "As I See Religion." He is happy in combining the creed of extreme liberalism with passionate religious fervor. No rationalist is more free of dogma and no monk more devout. It is indeed the extreme form of Protestantism, individualistic to the last degree; but the power of his pulpit oratory is heightened by a life of saintliness. I suspect that most church-members believe more and behave worse. Intellectually, he is tough-minded; humanly, he is tender-minded; philosophically, he is spiritually-minded. Such a man, who is a genius in religion as another man might be in music, is a law unto himself; thus I think the chief value of this volume is confessional. The title is accurate.

Thornton Macauley, the London correspondent of the New York *Times,* has produced a little book that will please Frank Crowninshield. It is an anthology of eating—"The Festive Board"—being selections from famous writers where the pleasures of the table are artistically set forth. Many people seem to forget the difference between feeding and eating; men who forget it wonder why their wives leave them. Even among those who in other respects are gastronomical artists, there are two things today that militate fatally against the pleasures of the table: cocktails and cigarettes. The so-called cocktail party, where every guest drinks three cocktails an hour before dinner, is the ideal way to unfit one either to eat or to enjoy the repast; and to begin the feast by smoking, and with cigarettes after every course, makes the tongue callous and insensitive to good cooking.

The accomplished lawyer and historian, Frank Bergen, delivered in the year 1924 an address before the Chamber of Commerce of Newark, N. J., on "Taxation and Public Debts." His warning was unheeded by the public, hence he has printed a new edition of the speech, annotating it up to the year 1932, with an Epilogue. Most of the evils he accurately predicted in 1924 have already come to pass: it looks now as if the worst were not far away. So long as city, State, and national legislatures continue to vote enormous appropriations from non-existent cash, they succeed in bringing us nearer to the abyss of bankruptcy. The only thing they will not do is to economize. Mr. Bergen believes we are living in practical communism. A man may own the title to his property but not much else. His figures for the State of New Jersey are appalling. Here are some of the things he said in 1924:

"State and local taxes, however, constitute only forty-two per cent of all the taxes we pay. The Federal taxes amount to fifty-eight per cent of the total, so that the people of this state pay at least $400,000,000 a year in Federal, State and local taxes—more than a million dollars a day, and almost exactly ten per cent of all the property, real and personal, in the State. . . .

"I have mentioned but a few of the myriad of statistics that indicate the progress of communism by means of the taxing power. I suppose no thoughtful man familiar with this situation believes that the progress indicated by the figures I have mentioned can continue indefinitely, or much longer, without precipitating a shock worse than any we may read of in the history of the thirties, the fifties and the seventies. . . .

"How the current craze for taxing and contracting public debts may culminate and terminate we shall probably know by and by, for it is quite certain that we are moving in a dangerous direction at a rapid pace. . . .

"It is not often that an economic craze can be cured by waving danger signals. Nature's remedy—financial and industrial collapse—is more cruel, but it is effective. Washington, the foremost man of all this world, speaking of the loose-jointed government under the Continental Congress, said it was founded on too favorable an opinion of human nature. . . .

"The most likely outcome of this reign of folly, it seems to me, is industrial collapse, followed by a period of distress, and a painful struggle back to rational methods. . . .

"The movement, as I have intimated, is the progress of communism in this country, working out its purposes by means of the taxing power—transferring the substance of property, but not as yet the paper title, from individuals to the several superimposed governments under which we live."

A word to the wise is *not* sufficient.

Colonel Charles W. Burpee, insurance man and literary critic on Hartford newspapers, writes me:

"Somehow I am impressed anew with what seems to have become the rule with these modern England writers. I do not know that it is in their printed grammars, but they are setting up a rule for the hitherto unlawful use of 'expect' (for presume or suspect—like the Southern negroes); 'like' (for 'as though'); 'further' for 'farther' (when they mean actual distance or physical procedure), and several other such words. The words crept into our language from the good old Southerners and their African friends, and were taken up by our good writers, the newspapers, and then in turn by the writers of books in the Mid-West. It has taken a generation for them to get over the ocean and become incorporated in the language of Walpole and Galsworthy. . . . In my newspaper days from 1883

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to 1905, it was woe to the reporter who wrote such words except in quotations."

The word "expect" for "suppose" or "believe" is universal in England today, although I have never heard it from the lips of a cultivated American. I don't like it, but there is nothing to be done—I did not know its origin until I read Colonel Burpee's letter. The English all say "like he did," a particular abomination to me; but they also pronounce "white" as "wite," and I don't like that any better than "ill" for "hill." I suppose that "further" for "farther" is as common in America as in England. But there is one thing in speech where we might well imitate the English; the average cultivated Englishman speaks better English than the average cultivated American. Many college graduates in America are afraid to use good grammar and pronunciation for fear they will seem "highbrow," when Lord love you! they could not really seem highbrow if they tried. All these defects are part of the genial vulgarity which is so often the hallmark of the American.

In the May issue I mentioned the book "Quiz Yourself," a terrifying display of questions which in most cases will reduce one's self-respect; I wondered if any one had ever passed perfectly, and I am now informed by John Francis Goldsmith that the highest grade so far reported is 88½ per cent, made by Sidney McG. Brown, Professor of History at Lehigh, author of "Mediæval Europe," just published.

Madeline Benhart-Stolz, of Severna Park, Md., has some bad news; she informs me that the error made most frequently by college professors in the five colleges with which she has been associated is "he don't." (Well, in one of our largest universities one learned scientific professor said "Eyetalian.")

Miss Jessie Bonstelle, founder and director of the Detroit Civic Theatre, who has done magnificent work of the highest value in that city for many years, was naturally shocked by my remark that the people in various American cities (including Detroit) had no more notion of what was going on in the modern theatre than if they lived in Manchuria. She writes goodnaturedly:

"*See* what I cut out of one of our Detroit papers, and *me* directing a Civic Theatre in Detroit that in three years has put on 131 plays of the most representative authors of 11 countries. Of course, I can't believe that you have been correctly reported. . . . We are having a mad struggle during this frightful financial depression to put through a $1.00 membership drive, otherwise, there won't be a Civic Theatre next year; then Detroit may be on the same basis as Manchuria. However, we live in hope."

Alas, I was correctly reported; and familiar as I was with the work of Jessie Bonstelle, I should have paused in my general denunciation to lay a flower at her feet. Detroit should be so proud of her that the city should never let that Civic Theatre diminish.

But in general, what I said is true of nearly all large American cities except New York (and Detroit). We ought not to be content with sentimental motion pictures and radio slush. I believe Americans can be as enterprising as Germans. The Germans in every town regard the theatre and music as necessities. Look at the theatre advertisements in almost any American city and see how accurately they reveal the intellectual and artistic level of the population.

With reference to my remarks on Barrie, I have a letter from William Gilman Low, Jr., of Tuxedo Park, N. Y.

"Barrett Wendell said to me once, 'Barrie will live forever. "Peter Pan" has produced a myth:—to create a myth is to become immortal.' . . . I was taken by my uncle Seth Low when I was a boy on to the back stage and met Joe Jefferson. I well recall two things. He seemed so very little and yet on the stage his dignity was so great—I never knew how small he was until I shook hands with him. In the second place he seemed so like 'Rip' on the stage that when I met him I felt that I was really meeting 'Rip.'"

Whenever it is possible for older persons to present small boys and girls to distinguished men they should do so. The impression is indelible.

Two nominations for the Ignoble Prize. From C. R. Lynn, Tampa, Fla.:

"The use of the words 'looks at' in the title of any book, essay, magazine article, or other form of literary expression. Every other one that comes to our notice is something about some doctor, lawyer, preacher, banker, or some one who 'looks at' something or other." This began with a book by Doctor Joseph Collins called "The Doctor Looks at Literature." It is a good book but is responsible for unworthy imitations and for a phrase that has become almost as tiresome as the nouns "urge" and "lure."

George H. Tripp, Librarian of the Free Public Library, New Bedford, Mass., nominates "going places," which he says is an expression gaining ground not only in newspapers but in books. He also dislikes (as I do) "quite a few" which is not only bad English, but means the opposite of what it tries to say.

The Faery Queene Club adds steadily to its membership. Miss Orah Dee Clark, of Ouzinkie, Alaska, says she read it "to satisfy a life-long wonder as to what it was all about. And I really enjoyed the entire unreal poem."

BOOKS MENTIONED, WITH NAMES OF AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS

"The Answering Glory," by R. C. Hutchinson. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.

"Champions Off Guard," by William O. Inglis. Vanguard. $3.

"Fighting for Fun," by Eddie Eagan. Macmillan. $2.50.

"Summer Holiday," by Sheila Kaye-Smith. Harpers. $2.

"England Muddles Through," by Harold Scarborough. Macmillan. $2.50.

"As I See Religion," by H. E. Fosdick. Harpers. $2.

"Memory's Parade," by A. Wallis Myers. Methuen, London. 7/6.

"The Lame, the Halt, the Blind," by H. W. Haggard. Harpers. $2.

"The Festive Board," by Thornton Macauley. Scribner's. $1.50.

"The Journal of Arnold Bennett," Vol. I. Viking. $4.

"Taxation and Public Debts," by Frank Bergen. Printed by author, 80 Park Place, Newark, N. J.

"This Is Russia," by George Earle Raiguel and William K. Huff. Penn. $5.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Flowering Wilderness

By John Galsworthy

Continued from page 134

At dinner that evening Dinny listened for any allusion by her uncle to Wilfrid Desert's return. There was none.

After dinner, she seated herself by Fleur in her habitual, slightly mystified, admiration of this cousin by marriage, whose pretty poise was so assured, whose face and figure so beautifully turned out, whose clear eyes were so seeing, whose knowledge of self was so disillusioned, and whose attitude to Michael seemed at once that of one looking up and looking down.

'If I ever married,' thought Dinny, I could never be like that to him. I would have to look him straight in the face as one sinner to another.'

"Do you remember your wedding, Fleur?" she said.

"I do, my dear. A distressing ceremony!"

"I saw your best man to-day."

The clear white round Fleur's eyes widened.

"Wilfrid? How did you remember him?"

"I was only sixteen, and he fluttered my young nerves."

"That is, of course, the function of a best man. Well, and how was he?"

"Very dark and dissolvent."

Fleur laughed. "He always was."

Looking at her, Dinny decided to press on.

"Yes. Uncle Lawrence told me he tried to carry dissolution rather far."

Fleur looked surprised. "I didn't know Bart ever noticed that."

"Uncle Lawrence," said Dinny, "is a bit uncanny."

"Wilfrid," murmured Fleur, with a little reminiscent smile, "really behaved quite well. He went East like a lamb."

"But surely that hasn't kept him East ever since?"

"No more than measles keeps you permanently to your room. Oh! no, he likes it. He's probably got a harem."

"No," said Dinny, "he's fastidious, or I should be surprised."

"Quite right, my dear; and one for my cheap cynicism. Wilfrid's the queerest sort of person, and rather a dear. Michael loved him. But," she said, suddenly looking at Dinny, "he's impossible to be in love with—disharmony personified. I studied him pretty closely at one time—had to, you know. He's elusive, passionate, and a bundle of nerves; soft-hearted and bitter. And search me for anything he believes in."

"Except," queried Dinny, "beauty, perhaps; and truth if he could find it?"

Fleur made the unexpected answer, "Well, my dear, we all believe in those, when they're about. The trouble is they aren't, unless—unless they lie in oneself, perhaps. And if you happen to be disharmonic, what chance have you of that? Where did you see him?"

"Staring at Foch."

"Ah! I seem to remember he rather idolised Foch. Poor Wilfrid, he hasn't much chance. Shell-shock, poetry, and his breeding—a father who's turned his back on life; a mother who was half an Italian, and ran off with another. Not restful. His eyes were his best point, they made you sorry for him and they're beautiful—rather a fatal combination. Did the young nerves flutter again?" She looked rather more broadly into Dinny's face.

"No, but I wondered if yours would still if I mentioned him."

"Mine? My child, I'm nearly thirty. I have two children, and"—her face darkened—"I have been inoculated. If I ever told any one about *that,* Dinny, I might tell you, but there are things one doesn't tell."

Up in her room, somewhat incommoded by the amplitude of Aunt Em's nightgown, Dinny stared into a fire lighted against protest. She felt that what she was feeling was absurd—a queer eagerness, at once shy and bold, the sensations, as it were, of direct action impending. And why? She had reseen a man who ten years before had made her feel silly; from all accounts a most unsatisfactory man. Taking a looking-glass, she scrutinised her face above the embroidery on the too ample gown. She saw what might have satisfied but did not.

'One gets tired of it,' she thought, 'always the same Botticellian artifact,

'The nose that's snub,
The eyes of blue!
'Ware self, you red-haired nymph,
And shun the image that is you!'

He was so accustomed to the East, to dark eyes through veils, languishing; to curves enticingly disguised; to sex, mystery, teeth like pearls—*vide* houri! Dinny showed her own teeth to the glass. There she was on safe ground—the best teeth in her family. Nor was her hair really red—more what Miss Braddon used to call auburn! Nice word! Pity it had gone out. With all that embroidery it was no good examining herself below the Victorian washing line. Remember that to-morrow before her bath! For what she was about to examine might the Lord make her truly thankful! Putting down the glass with a little sigh, she got into bed.

III

Wilfrid Desert still maintained his chambers in Cork Street. They were, in fact, paid for by Lord Mullyon, who used them on the rare occasions when he emerged from rural retreat. It was not saying much that the secluded peer had more in common with his second than with his eldest son, who was in Parliament. It gave him, however, no particular pain to encounter Wilfrid; but as a rule the chambers were occu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pied only by Stack, who had been Wilfrid's batman in the war, and had for him one of those sphinx-like habits which wear better than expressed devotions. When Wilfrid returned at a moment or two's notice, his rooms were ever exactly as he left them, neither more nor less dusty or unaired; the same clothes hung on the same clothes stretchers; and the same nicely cooked steak and mushrooms appeased his first appetite. The ancestral 'junk,' fringed and dotted by Eastern whims brought home, gave to the large sitting-room the same castled air of immutable possession. And the divan before the log fire received Wilfrid as if he had never left it. He lay there the morning after his encounter with Dinny, wondering why he could only get really good coffee when Stack made it. The East was the home of coffee, but Turkish coffee was a rite, a toy; and, like all rites and toys, served but to titillate the soul. This was his third day in London after two years; and in those two last years he had been through a good deal more than he would ever care to speak of, or even wish to remember; including one experience which still divided him against himself, however much he affected to discredit its importance. In other words, he had come back with a skeleton in his cupboard. He had brought back, too, enough poems for a fourth slender volume. He lay there, debating whether the longest of these poems could be included. It was the outcome of that experience; in his view the best poem he had ever written—a pity it should not be published, but—! And the 'but' was so considerable that he had many times been on the point of tearing the thing up, obliterating all trace of it, as he would have wished to blot remembrance from his mind. Again, but—! The poem expressed his defence for allowing what he hoped no one knew had happened to him. To tear it up would be parting with his defence. For he could never again adequately render his sensations in that past dilemma. He would be parting with his best protection from his own conscience, too; and perhaps with the only means of laying a ghost. For he sometimes thought that unless he proclaimed to the world what had happened to him, he would never again feel quite in possession of his soul.

Reading it through, he thought: 'It's a damned sight better and deeper than Lyall's confounded poem.' And without any obvious connection he began to think of the girl he had met the day before. Curious that he had remembered her at Michael's wedding, a transparent slip of a young thing like a Botticelli Venus, Angel, or Madonna—so little difference between them—a charming young creature, then. Yes, and a charming young woman now, of real quality, with a sense of humour, and an understanding mind. Dinny Cherrell! Charwell they spelled it, he remembered. He wouldn't mind showing her his poems; he would trust her reactions.

Partly because he was thinking of her, and partly because he took a taxi, he was late for lunch, and met Dinny on the doorstep of Dumourieux's just as she was about to go away.

There is perhaps no better test of woman's character than to keep her waiting for lunch in a public place. Dinny greeted him with a smile.

"I thought you'd probably forgotten."

"It was the traffic. How can philosophers talk of time being space or space time? It's disproved whenever two people lunch together. I allowed ten minutes for under a mile from Cork Street, and here I am ten minutes late. Terribly sorry!"

"My father says you must add ten per cent to all timing since taxis took the place of hansoms. Do you remember the hansom?"

"Rather!"

"I never was in London till they were over."

"If you know this place, lead on! I was told of it but I've not yet been here."

"It's underground. The cooking's French."

Divested of their coats, they proceeded to an end table.

"Very little for me, please," said Dinny. "Say cold chicken, a salad and some coffee."

"Anything the matter?"

"Only a spare habit."

"I see. We'll both have it. No wine?"

"No, thanks. Is eating little a good sign, do you think?"

"Not if done on principle."

"You don't like things done on principle?"

"I distrust the people who do them—self-righteous."

"I think that's too sweeping. You are rather sweeping, aren't you?"

"I was thinking of the sort of people who don't eat because it's sensual. That's not your reason, is it?"

"Oh! no," said Dinny, "I only dislike feeling full. And very little makes me feel that. I don't know very much about them so far, but I think the senses are good things."

"The only things, probably."

"Is that why you write poetry?"

Desert grinned.

"I should think *you* might write verse, too."

"Only rhymes."

"The place for poetry is a desert. Ever seen one?"

"No. I should like to." And, having said that, she sat in slight surprise, remembering her negative reaction to the American professor and his great open spaces. But no greater contrast was possible than between Hallorsen and this dark, disharmonic young man, who sat staring at her with those eyes of his till she had again that thrill down her spine. Crumbling her roll, she said: "I saw Michael and Fleur last night at dinner."

"Oh!" his lips curled: "I made a fool of myself over Fleur once. Perfect, isn't she—in her way?"

"Yes," and her eyes added: 'Don't run her down!'

"Marvellous equipment and control."

"I don't think you know her," said Dinny, "and I'm sure I don't."

He leaned forward. "You seem to me a loyal sort of person. Where did you pick that up?"

"Our family motto is the word 'Leal.' That ought to have cured me, oughtn't it?"

"I don't know," he said, abruptly, "whether I understand what loyalty is. Loyalty to what? To whom? Nothing's fixed in this world; everything's relative. Loyalty's the mark of the static mind, or else just a superstition, and anyway the negation of curiosity."

"There *are* things worth being loyal to, surely. Cold chicken, for instance, or one's religion."

He looked at her so strangely that Dinny was almost scared.

"Religion? Have you one?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Well, roughly, I suppose."

"What? Can you swallow the dogmas of any religious creed? Do you believe one legend more true than another? Can you suppose one set of beliefs about the Unknowable has more value than the rest? Religion! You've got a sense of humour. Does it leave you at the word?"

"No; only religion, I suppose, may be just a sense of an all-pervading spirit, and the ethical creed that seems best to serve it."

"H'm! A pretty far cry from what's generally meant, and even then how do you know what best serves an all-pervading spirit?"

"I take that on trust."

"There's where we differ. Look!" he said, and it seemed to her that excitement had crept into his voice: "What's the use of our reasoning powers, our mental faculties? I take each problem as it comes, I do the sum, I return the answer, and so I act. I act according to a reasoned estimate of what is best."

"For whom?"

"For myself and the world at large."

"Which first?"

"It's the same thing."

"Always? I wonder. And, anyway, that means doing so long a sum every time that I can't think how you ever get to acting. And surely ethical rules are just the result of countless decisions on those same problems made by people in the past, so why not take them for granted?"

"None of those decisions were made by people of my temperament or in my circumstances."

"No, I see that. You follow what they call case law, then. But how English!"

"Sorry!" said Desert, abruptly: "I'm boring you. Have a sweet?"

Dinny put her elbows on the table and, leaning her chin on her hands, looked at him earnestly.

"You weren't boring me. On the contrary, you're interesting me frightfully. Only I suppose that women act much more instinctively; I suppose that really means they accept themselves as more like each other than men do, and are more ready to trust their instinctive sense of general experience."

"That *has* been women's way; whether it will be much longer, I don't know."

"I think it will," said Dinny. "I don't believe we shall ever much care for sums. I *will* have a sweet, please. Stewed prunes, I think."

Desert stared at her, and began to laugh.

"You're wonderful. We'll both have them. Is your family a very formal one?"

"Not exactly formal, but they do believe in tradition and the past."

"And do you?"

"I don't know. I definitely like old things, and old places, and old people. I like anything that's stamped like a coin. I like to feel one has roots. I was always fond of history. All the same one can't help laughing. There's something very comic about the way we're all tied—like a hen by a chalk mark to its beak."

Desert stretched out his hand and she put hers into it.

"Shake hands on that saving grace."

"Some day," said Dinny, "you're going to tell me something. But at the moment what play are we going to?"

"Is there anything by a man called Shakespeare?"

With some difficulty they discovered that a work by the world's greatest dramatist was being given in a theatre beyond the pale of the river. They went to it, and, when the show was over, Desert said, hesitating: "I wonder if you would come and have tea at my rooms?"

Dinny smiled and nodded, and from that moment was conscious of a difference in his manner. It was at once more intimate yet more respectful, as if he had said to himself: 'This is my equal.'

That hour of tea, brought by Stack, a man with strange understanding eyes and something monk-like in his look, seemed to her quite perfect. It was like no other hour she had ever spent, and at the end of it she knew she was in love. The tiny seed planted ten years before had flowered. This was such a marvel, so peculiar to one who at twenty-six had begun to think she would never be in love, that every now and then she drew in her breath and looked wonderingly at his face. Why on earth did she feel like this? It was absurd! And it was going to be painful, because he wasn't going to love her. Why should he? And if he wasn't, she mustn't show, and how was she to help showing?

"When am I going to see you again?" he said, when she stood up to go.

"Do you want to?"

"Extraordinarily."

"But why?"

"Why not? You're the first lady I've spoken to for ten years. I'm not at all sure you're not the first lady I've ever spoken to."

"If we are going to see each other again, you mustn't laugh at me."

"Laugh at you! One couldn't. So when?"

"Well! At present I'm sleeping in a foreign nightgown at Mount Street. By rights I ought to be at Condaford. But my sister's going to be married in town next week, and my brother's coming back from Egypt on Monday, so perhaps I'll send for things and stay up. Where would you like to see me?"

"Will you come for a drive to-morrow? I haven't been to Richmond or Hampton Court for years."

"I've never been."

"All right! I'll pick you up in front of Foch at two o'clock, wet or fine."

"I will be pleased to come, young Sir."

"Splendid!" And, suddenly bending, he raised her hand and put his lips to it.

"Highly courteous," said Dinny. "Good-bye!"

IV

Preoccupied with this stupendous secret, Dinny's first instinct was for solitude, but she was booked for dinner with the Adrian Cherrells. On her uncle's marriage with Diana Ferse the house of painful memories in Oakley Street had been given up, and they were economically installed in one of those spacious Bloomsbury squares now successfully regaining the gentility lost in the eighteen-thirties and forties. The locality had been chosen for its proximity to Adrian's "bones," for at his age he regarded as important every minute saved for the society of his wife. The robust virility, which Dinny had predicted would accrue to her uncle from a year spent in the presence of Professor Hallorsen and New Mexico, was represented by a somewhat deeper shade of brown in his creased cheeks, and a more frequent smile on his long face. It was a lasting pleasure to Dinny to think that she had given him the right advice, and that he had taken it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Diana, too, was fast regaining the sparkle which, before her marriage with poor Ferse, had made her a member of 'Society.' But the hopeless nature of Adrian's occupation, and the extra time he needed from her, had precluded her from any return to that sacred ring. She inclined more and more, in fact, to be a wife and mother. And this seemed natural to one with Dinny's partiality for her uncle. On her way there she debated whether or not to say what she had been doing. Having little liking for shifts and subterfuge, she decided to be frank. 'Besides,' she thought, 'a maiden in love always likes to talk about the object of her affections.' Again, if not to have a confidant became too wearing, Uncle Adrian was the obvious choice; partly because he knew at first hand something of the East, but chiefly because he was Uncle Adrian.

The first topics at dinner, however, were naturally Clare's marriage and Hubert's return. Dinny was somewhat exercised over her sister's choice. Sir Gerald (Jerry) Corven was forty, active and middle-sized, with a daring face. She recognised that he had great charm, and her fear was, rather, that he had too much. He was high in the Colonial service, one of those men who —people instinctively said—would go far. She wondered also whether Clare was not too like him, daring and brilliant, a bit of a gambler, and, of course, seventeen years younger. Diana, who had known him well, said:

"The seventeen years' difference is the best thing about it. Jerry wants steadying. If he can be a father to her as well, it may work. He's had infinite experiences. I'm glad it's Ceylon."

"Why?"

"He won't meet his past."

"Has he an awful lot of past?"

"My dear, he's very much in love at the moment; but with men like Jerry you never know; all that charm, and so much essential liking for thin ice."

"Marriage doth make cowards of us all," murmured Adrian.

"It won't have that effect on Jerry Corven; he takes to risk as a goldfish takes to mosquito larvæ. Is Clare very smitten, Dinny?"

"Yes, but Clare loves thin ice, too."

"And yet," said Adrian, "I shouldn't call either of them really modern. They've both got brains and like using them."

"That's quite true, Uncle. Clare gets all she can out of life, but she believes in life terribly. She might become another Hester Stanhope."

"Good for you, Dinny! But to be that she'd have to get rid of Gerald Corven first. And if I read Clare, I think she might have scruples."

Dinny regarded her uncle with wide eyes.

"Do you say that because you know Clare, or because you're a Cherrell, Uncle?"

"I think because *she's* a Cherrell, my dear."

"Scruples," murmured Dinny, "I don't believe Aunt Em has them. Yet she's as much of a Cherrell as any of us."

"Em," said Adrian, "reminds me of nothing so much as a find of bones that won't join up. You can't say of what she's the skeleton. Scruples are emphatically co-ordinate."

"No! Adrian," murmured Diana, "not bones at dinner. When does Hubert arrive? I'm really anxious to see him and young Jean. After eighteen months of bliss in the Soudan which will be top dog?"

"Jean, surely."

Dinny shook her head. "I don't think so, Uncle."

"That's your sisterly pride."

"No. Hubert's got more continuity. Jean rushes at things and must handle them at once, but Hubert steers the course, I'm pretty sure. Uncle, where is a place called Darfur? And how do you spell it?"

"With an 'r' or without. It's west of the Soudan; much of it is desert and pretty inaccessible, I believe. Why?"

"I was lunching to-day with Mr. Desert, Michael's best man, you remember, and he mentioned it."

"Has he been there?"

"I think he's been everywhere in the Near East."

"I know his brother," said Diana, "Charles Desert, one of the most provocative of the younger politicians. He'll almost certainly be Minister of Education in the next Tory Government. That'll put the finishing touch to Lord Mullyon's retirement. I've never met Wilfrid. Is he nice?"

"Well," said Dinny, with what she believed to be detachment, "I only met him yesterday. He seems rather like a mince pie, you take a spoonful and hope. If you can eat the whole, you have a happy year."

"I should like to meet the young man," said Adrian. "He did good things in the war, and I know his verse."

"Really, Uncle? I could arrange it; so far we are in daily communication."

"Oh!" said Adrian, and looked at her. "I'd like to discuss the Hittite type with him. I suppose you know that what we are accustomed to regard as the most definitely Jewish characteristics are pure Hittite according to ancient Hittite drawings?"

"But weren't they all the same stock, really?"

"By no means, Dinny. The Israelites were Arabs. What the Hittites were we have yet to discover. The modern Jew in this country and in Germany is probably more Hittite than Semite."

"Do you know Mr. Jack Muskham, Uncle?"

"Only by repute. He's a cousin of Lawrence's and an authority on bloodstock. I believe he advocates a re-introduction of Arab blood into our racehorses. There's something in it if you could get the very best strain. Has young Desert been to Nejd? You can still only get it there, I believe."

"I don't know. Where is Nejd?"

"Centre of Arabia. But Muskham will never get his idea adopted, there's no tighter mind than the pukka racing man's. He's a pretty pure specimen himself, I believe, except for this hobby."

"Jack Muskham," said Diana, "was once romantically in love with one of my sisters; it's made him a misogynist."

"H'm! That's a bit cryptic!"

"He's rather fine-looking, I think," said Dinny.

"Wears clothes wonderfully and has a reputation for hating everything modern. I haven't met him for years, but I used to know him rather well. Why, Dinny?"

"I just happened to see him the other day, and wondered."

"Talking of Hittites," said Diana, "I've often thought those very old Cornish families, like the Deserts, have a streak of Phœnician in them. Look at Lord Mullyon. There's a queer type!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Fanciful, my love. You'd be more likely to find that streak in the simple folk. The Deserts must have married into non-Cornish stock for hundreds of years. The higher you go in the social scale, the less chance of preserving a primitive strain."

"*Are* they a very old family?" said Dinny.

"Hoary and pretty queer. But you know my views about old families, Dinny, so I won't enlarge."

Dinny nodded. She remembered very well that nerve-racked walk along Chelsea Embankment just after Ferse returned. And she looked affectionately into his face. It *was* nice to think that he had come into his own at last . . .

When she got back to Mount Street that night her uncle and aunt had gone up, but the butler was seated in the hall. He rose as she entered.

"I didn't know you had a key, Miss."

"I'm terribly sorry, Blore, you were having such a nice snooze."

"I was, Miss Dinny. After a certain age, as you'll find out, one gets a liking for dropping off at improper moments. Now Sir Lawrence, he's not a good sleeper, but, give you my word, if I go into his study almost any time when he's at work, I'll find him opening his eyes. And my Lady, she can do her eight hours, but I've known her to drop off when someone's talking to her, especially the old Rector at Lippinghall, Mr. Tasburgh—a courtly old gentleman, but he has that effect. Even Mr. Michael—but then he's in Parliament, and they get the 'abit. Still, I do think, Miss, whether it was the war, or people not having any hope of anything, and running about so, that there's a tendency, as the saying is, towards sleep. Well, it does you good. Give you my word, Miss; I was dead to the world before I had that forty winks, and now I could talk to you for hours."

"That would be lovely, Blore. Only I find, so far, that I'm sleepiest at bed time."

"Wait till you're married, Miss. Only I do hope you won't be doing that yet awhile. I said to Mrs. Blore last night: 'If Miss Dinny gets taken off, it'll be the life and soul of the party gone!' I've never seen much of Miss Clare, so that leaves me cold; but I heard my Lady yesterday telling you to go and find out for yourself how it was done, and, as I said to Mrs. Blore, 'Miss Dinny's like a daughter of the house, and' —well—you know my sentiments, Miss."

"Dear Blore! I'm afraid I must go up now, I've had rather a tiring day."

"Quite, Miss. Pleasant dreams!"

"Good-night!"

Pleasant dreams! Perhaps the dreams might be, but would reality? What uncharted country was she not entering with just a star to guide! And was it a fixed star, or some flaring comet? At least five men had wanted to marry her, all of whom she had felt she could sum up, so that a marriage would have been no great risk. And now she only wanted to marry one, but there he was, an absolutely uncertain quantity except that he could rouse in her a feeling she had never had before. Life was perverse. You dipped your finger in a lucky bag, and brought out—what? To-morrow she would walk with him. They would see trees and grass together; scenery and gardens, pictures, perhaps; the river, and fruit blossom. She would know at least how his spirit and her own agreed about many things she cared for. And yet, if she found they didn't agree, would it make any difference to her feeling? It would not.

'I understand now,' she thought, 'why we call lovers dotty. All I care about is that he should feel what I feel, and be dotty too. And of course he won't—why should he?'

V

The drive to Richmond Park, over Ham Common and Kingston Bridge to Hampton Court, and back through Twickenham and Kew, was remarkable for alternation between silence and volubility. Dinny was, as it were, the observer, and left to Wilfrid all the piloting. Her feelings made her shy, and it was apparent that he was only able to expand if left to his free will—the last person in the world to be drawn out. They duly lost themselves in the maze at Hampton Court, where, as Dinny said:

"Only spiders who can spin threads out of themselves, or ghosts who can tails unfold, would have a chance."

On the way back they got out at Kensington Gardens, dismissed the hired car, and walked to the tea kiosk. Over the pale beverage he asked her suddenly whether she would mind reading his new poems in manuscript.

"Mind? I should love it."

"I want candid opinion."

"You will get it," said Dinny. "When can I have them?"

"I'll bring them round to Mount Street and drop them in your letter box after dinner."

"Won't you come in this time?"

He shook his head.

When he left her at Stanhope Gate, he said abruptly:

"It's been a simply lovely afternoon. Thank you!"

"It is for me to thank you."

"You! You've got more friends than quills upon the fretful porpentine. It's I who am the pelican."

"Adieu, pelican!"

"Adieu, flowering wilderness!"

The words seemed musical all the way down Mount Street.

A fat unstamped envelope was brought in about half past nine with the last post. Dinny took it from Blore, and slipping it under the "Bridge of San Luis Rey," went on listening to her aunt.

"When I was a girl I squeezed my own waist, Dinny. We suffered for a principle: They say it's comin' in again. I shan't do it, so hot and worryin'; but you'll have to."

"Not I."

"When the waist has settled down there'll be a lot of squeezin'."

"The really tight waist will never come in again, Auntie."

"And hats. In 1900 we were like egg-stands with explodin' eggs in them. Cauliflowers and hydrangeas, and birds of a feather, enormous. They stuck out. The Parks were comparatively pure. Sea-green suits you, Dinny; you ought to be married in it."

"I think I'll go up, Aunt Em. I'm rather tired."

"That's eatin' so little."

"I eat enormously. Good-night, dear."

Without undressing she sat down to the poems, nervously anxious to like them, for she knew that he would see through any falsity. To her relief they had the tone she remembered in his other volumes, but were less bitter and more concerned with beauty. When she had finished the main sheaf, she came on a much longer poem entitled

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The Leopard," wrapped round in a blank sheet of paper. Was it so wrapped to keep her from reading it; why, then, had he enclosed it? She decided that he had been doubtful, and wanted her verdict. Below the title was written the line:

"Can the leopard change its spots?"

It was the story of a young monk, secretly without faith, sent on a proselytising expedition. Seized by infidels, and confronted with the choice between death and recantation, he recants and accepts the religion of his captors. The poem was seared with passages of such deep feeling that they hurt her. It had a depth and fervour which took her breath away; it was a pæan in praise of contempt for convention faced with the stark reality of the joy in living, yet with a haunting moan of betrayal running through it. It swayed her this way and that; and she put it down with a feeling almost of reverence for one who could so express such a deep and tangled spiritual conflict. With that reverence was mingled a compassion for the stress he must have endured before he could have written this, and a feeling, akin to that which mothers feel, of yearning to protect him from his disharmonies and violence.

They had arranged to meet the following day at the National Gallery, and she went there before time, taking the poems with her. He came on her in front of Gentile Bellini's "Mathematician." They stood for some time looking at it without a word.

"Truth, quality, and decorative effect. Have you read my stuff?"

"Yes. Come and sit down, I've got them here."

They sat down, and she gave him the envelope.

"Well?" he said; and she saw his lips quivering.

"Terribly good, I think."

"Really?"

"Even truly. One, of course, is much the finest."

"Which?"

Dinny's smile said: "You ask that?"

"The Leopard?"

"Yes. It hurt me, here."

"Shall I throw it out?"

By intuition she realised that on her answer he would act, and said feebly: "You wouldn't pay attention to what I said, would you?"

"What you say shall go."

"Then of course you can't throw it out. It's the finest thing you've done."

"Inshallah!"

"What made you doubt?"

"It's a naked thing."

"Yes," said Dinny, "naked—but beautiful. When a thing's naked it must be beautiful."

"Hardly the fashionable belief."

"Surely a civilised being naturally covers deformities and sores. There's nothing fine in being a savage that I can see, even in art."

"You run the risk of excommunication. Ugliness is a sacred cult, now."

"Reaction from the chocolate box," murmured Dinny.

"Ah! Whoever invented those lids sinned against the holy ghost, he offended the little ones."

"Artists are children, you mean?"

"Well, aren't they? or would they carry on as they do?"

"Yes, they do seem to love toys. What gave you the idea for that poem?" His face again had that look of deep waters stirred, as when Muskham had spoken to them under the Foch statue.

"Tell you some day, perhaps. Shall we go on round?"

When they parted, he said: "To-morrow's Sunday. I shall be seeing you?"

"If you will."

"What about the Zoo?"

"No, not the Zoo. I hate cages."

"Quite right. The Dutch garden near Kensington Palace?"

"Yes."

And that made the fifth consecutive day of meeting.

For Dinny it was like a spell of good weather, when every night you go to sleep hoping it will last, and every morning wake up and rub your eyes seeing that it has.

Each day she responded to his: "Shall I see you to-morrow?" with an "If you will"; each day she concealed from everybody with care whom she was seeing, and how, and when; and it all seemed to her so unlike herself, that she would think: 'Who is this young woman, who goes out stealthily like this, and meets a young man, and comes back feeling as if she had been treading on air? Is it some kind of a long dream I'm having?' Only, in dreams one didn't eat cold chicken and drink tea.

The moment most illuminative of her state of mind was that when Hubert and Jean walked into the hall at Mount Street, where they were to stay till after Clare's wedding. This first sight for eighteen months of her beloved brother should surely have caused her to feel tremulous. But she greeted him, steady as a rock even to the power of cool appraisement. He seemed extremely well, brown, and less thin, but more commonplace. She tried to think that was because he was now safe and married and restored to soldiering, but she knew that comparison with Wilfrid had to do with it. She seemed to know suddenly that in Hubert there had never been capacity for any deep spiritual conflict; he was of the type she knew so well, seeing the trodden path and without real question following. Besides, Jean made all the difference! One could never again be to him, or he to her, as before his marriage. Jean was brilliantly alive and glowing. They had come the whole way from Khartoum to Croydon by air with four stops. Dinny was troubled by the inattention which underlay her seeming absorption in their account of life out there, till a mention of Darfur made her prick her ears. Darfur was where something had happened to Wilfrid. There were still followers of the Mahdi there, she gathered. The personality of Jerry Corven was discussed. Hubert was enthusiastic about 'a job of work' he had done. Jean filled out the gap. The wife of a Deputy Commissioner had gone off her head about him. It was said that Jerry Corven had behaved badly.

"Well, well!" said Sir Lawrence, "Jerry's a privateer, and women ought not to go off their heads about him."

"Yes," said Jean. "It's silly to blame men nowadays."

"In old days," murmured Lady Mont, "men did the advancin' and women were blamed; now women do it and the men are blamed."

The extraordinary consecutiveness of the speech struck with a silencing effect on every tongue, until she added: "I once saw two camels, d'you remember, Lawrence, so pretty."

Jean looked rather horrified, and Dinny smiled.

Hubert came back to the line. "I

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

don't know," he said; "he's marrying our sister."

"Clare'll give and take," said Lady Mont. "It's only when their noses are curved. The Rector," she added to Jean, "says there's a Tasburgh nose. You haven't got it. It crinkles. Your brother Alan had it a little." And she looked at Dinny. "In China, too. I said he'd marry a purser's daughter."

"Good God, Aunt Em, he hasn't!" cried Jean.

"No. Very nice girls, I'm sure. Not like clergymen's."

"Thank you!"

"I mean the sort you find in the Park. They call themselves that when they want company. I thought everybody knew."

"Jean was rectory bred, Aunt Em," said Hubert.

"But she's been married to you two years. Who was it said: 'And they shall multiply exceedin'ly'?"

"Moses," hazarded Dinny.

"And why not?"

Her eyes rested on Jean, who flushed. Sir Lawrence remarked quickly: "I hope Hilary will be as short with Clare as he was with you and Jean, Hubert. That was a record."

"Hilary preaches beautifully," said Lady Mont. "At Edward's death he preached on 'Solomon in all his glory.' It was touchin'. And when we shot Casement, you remember—so stupid of us!—on the beam and the mote. We had it in our eye."

"If I could love a sermon," said Dinny, "it would be Uncle Hilary's."

"Yes," said Lady Mont, "he could borrow more barley-sugar than any little boy I ever knew, and look like an angel. Your Aunt Wilmet and I used to hold him upside down—like puppies, you know—hopin', but we never got it back."

"You must have been a lovely family, Aunt Em."

"Tryin'. Our father that was not in Heaven took care not to see us much. Our mother couldn't help it—poor dear! We had no sense of duty."

"And now you all have so much; isn't it queer?"

"Have I a sense of duty, Lawrence?"

"Emphatically not, Em."

"I thought so."

"But wouldn't you say as a whole, Uncle Lawrence, that the Cherrells have too much sense of duty?"

"How can they have *too* much?" said Jean.

Sir Lawrence fixed his monocle.

"I scent heresy, Dinny."

"Surely duty's narrowing, Uncle? Father and Uncle Lionel and Uncle Hilary, and even Uncle Adrian, always think first of what they ought to do. They despise their own wants. Very fine, of course, but rather dull."

Sir Lawrence dropped his eyeglasses.

"Your family, Dinny," he said, "perfectly illustrate the mandarin. They hold the Empire together. Public schools, Osborne, Sandhurst; oh! ah! and much more. From generation to generation it begins in the home. Mother's milk with them. Service to Church and State—very interesting, very admirable."

"Especially when they've kept on top, by means of it," murmured Dinny.

"Shucks!" said Hubert: "As if any one thought of that in the Services!"

"You don't think of it because you don't have to; but you would fast enough if you did have to."

"Somewhat cryptic, Dinny," put in Sir Lawrence; "you mean if anything threatened them, they'd think: 'We simply mustn't be removed, we're It.'"

"But are they It, Uncle?"

"With whom have you been associating, my dear?"

"Oh! no one. One must think sometimes."

"Too depressin'," said Lady Mont. "The Russian revolution, and all that."

Dinny was conscious that Hubert was regarding her as if thinking: 'What's come to Dinny?'

"If one wants to take out a lynch-pin," he said, "one always can, but the wheel comes off."

"Well put, Hubert," said Sir Lawrence; "it's a mistake to think one can replace type or create it quickly. The sahib's born, not made, that is, if you take the atmosphere of homes as part of birth."

"No," said Lady Mont, "I won't."

"What, Aunt Em?"

"Drink champagne on Wednesday, nasty bubbly stuff!"

"Must we have it at all, dear?"

"I'm afraid of Blore. He's so used. I might tell him, but it'd be there."

"Have you heard of Hallorsen lately, Dinny?" asked Hubert, suddenly.

"Not since Uncle Adrian came back. I believe he's in Central America."

"He *was* large," said Lady Mont. "Hilary's two girls, Sheila, Celia, and little Anne, five—I'm glad you're not to be, Dinny. It's superstition, of course."

Dinny leaned back and the light fell on her throat.

"To be a bridesmaid once is quite enough, Aunt Em . . ."

When next morning she met Wilfrid at the Wallace pictures, she said:

"Would you by any chance like to be at Clare's wedding to-morrow?"

"No hat and no black tails; I gave them to Stack."

"I remember how you looked, perfectly. You had a grey cravat and a gardenia."

"And you had on sea-green."

"Eau-de-nil. I'd like you to have seen my family, though, they'll all be there; and we could have discussed them afterwards."

"I'll turn up among the 'also ran'; and keep out of sight."

'Not from me,' thought Dinny. So she would not have to go a whole day without seeing him!

With every meeting he seemed less, as it were, divided against himself; and sometimes would look at her so intently that her heart would beat. When she looked at him, which was seldom, except when he wasn't aware, she was very careful to keep her gaze limpid. How fortunate that one always had that pull over men, knew when they were looking at one, and was able to look at them without their knowing!

When they parted this time, he said: "Come down to Richmond again on Thursday. I'll pick you up at Foch—two o'clock as before."

And she said: "Yes."

VI

Clare Cherrell's wedding, in Hanover Square, was "fashionable" and would occupy with a list of names a quarter of a column in the traditional prints. As Dinny said:

"So delightful for them!"

With her father and mother Clare came to Mount Street from Condaford over night. Busy with her younger sister to the last, and feeling an emotion humorously disguised, Dinny arrived with Lady Cherrell at the Church not long before the bride. She lingered to speak to an old retainer at the bottom of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the aisle, and caught sight of Wilfrid. He was on the bride's side, far back, gazing at her. She gave him a swift smile, then passed up the aisle to join her mother in the left front pew. Michael whispered as she went by:

"People have rolled up, haven't they?"

They had. Clare was well known and popular, Jerry Corven even better known, if not so popular. Dinny looked round at the "audience," one could never credit a wedding with the word congregation. Irregular and with a good deal of character, their faces refused generalisation. They looked like people with convictions and views of their own. The men conformed to no particular type, having none of that depressing sameness which used to characterise the German officer caste. With herself and her mother in the front pew were Hubert and Jean, Uncle Lawrence and Aunt Em; in the pew behind sat Adrian with Diana, Mrs. Hilary and Lady Alison. Dinny caught sight of Jack Muskham at the end of two or three rows back, tall, well-dressed, rather bored-looking. He nodded to her, and she thought: 'Odd, his remembering me!'

On the Corven side of the aisle were people of quite as much diversity of face and figure. Except Jack Muskham, the bridegroom and his best man, hardly a man gave the impression of being well-dressed, or of having thought about his clothes. But from their faces Dinny received the impression that they were all safe in the acceptance of a certain creed. Not one gave her the same feeling that Wilfrid's face brought of spiritual struggle and disharmony, of dreaming, suffering and discovery. 'I'm fanciful,' she thought. And her eyes came to rest on Adrian, who was just behind her. He was smiling quietly above that goatee beard of his, which lengthened his thin brown visage. 'He has a dear face,' she thought, 'not conceited, like the men who wear those pointed beards as a rule. He always will be the nicest man in the world.' And she whispered: "Fine collection of bones here, Uncle."

"I should like your skeleton, Dinny."

"I shall be burned and scattered. H'ssh!"

The choir was coming in, followed by the officiating priests. Jerry Corven turned. Those lips smiling like a cat's beneath that thin cut moustache, those hardwood features and daring searching eyes! Dinny thought with sudden dismay: 'How could Clare! But after all I'd think the same of any face but one, just now. I'm going potty.' Then Clare came swaying up the aisle on her father's arm! 'Looking a treat! Bless her!' A gush of emotion caught Dinny by the throat, and she slipped her hand into her mother's. Poor mother! She was awfully pale! Really the whole thing was stupid! People *would* make it long and trying and emotional. Thank goodness Dad's old black tail-coat really looked quite decent—she had taken out the stains with ammonia; and he stood as she had seen him when reviewing troops. If Uncle Hilary happened to have a button wrong, Dad would notice it. Only there wouldn't be any buttons. She longed fervently to be beside Wilfrid away at the back. He would have nice unorthodox thoughts; and they would soothe each other with private smiles.

Now the bridesmaids! Hilary's two girls, her cousins Monica and Joan, slender and keen. Little Celia Moriston, fair as a seraph (if that was female), Sheila Ferse, dark and brilliant; and toddley little Anne—a perfect dumpling!

Once on her knees, Dinny quietened down. She remembered how they used to kneel, night-gowned against their beds, when Clare was a tiny of three and she herself a 'big girl' of six. She used to hang on to the bed-edge by the chin so as to save the knees; and how ducky Clare had looked when she held her hands up like the child in the Reynolds picture! 'That man!' thought Dinny: 'will hurt her! I know he will!' Her thoughts turned again to Michael's wedding all those ten years ago. There she had stood, not three yards from where she was kneeling now, alongside a girl she didn't know—some relative of Fleur's. And her eyes, taking in this and that with the fluttered eagerness of youth, had lighted on Wilfrid standing sideways, keeping watch on Michael! Poor Michael! He had seemed rather daft that day, from excessive triumph! She could remember quite distinctly thinking: 'Michael and his lost angel!' There had been in Wilfrid's face something which suggested that he had been cast out of happiness, a scornful and yet yearning look. That was only two years after the Armistice, and she knew now what utter disillusionment and sense of wreckage he had suffered after the war. He had been talking to her freely the last two days; had even dwelled with humorous contempt on his infatuation for Fleur eighteen months after that marriage, which had sent him flying off to the East. Dinny, but ten when the war broke out, remembered it chiefly as meaning that mother had been anxious about father, had knitted all the time, and been a sort of sock depot; that everybody hated the Germans; that she had been forbidden sweets because they were made with saccharine, and finally the excitement and grief when Hubert went off to the war, and letters from him didn't often come. From Wilfrid these last few days she had gathered more clearly and poignantly than ever yet what the war had meant to some who, like Michael and himself, had been in the thick of it for years. With his gift of expression he had made her feel how roots had been torn away, and values hopelessly changed, and the growth of profound mistrust of all that age and tradition had decreed and sanctified. He had got over the war now, he said. He might think so, but there were in him still torn odds and ends of nerves not yet mended up. She never saw him without wanting to pass a cool hand over his forehead.

The ring was on now, the fateful words said, the exhortations over, they were going to the vestry. Her mother and Hubert followed. Dinny sat motionless, her eyes fixed on the East window. Marriage! What an impossible state, except—with a single being.

A voice in her ear said:

"Lend me your hanky, Dinny. Mine's soakin', and your uncle's is blue."

Dinny passed her a scrap of lawn, and surreptitiously powdered her own nose.

"Be done at Condaford, Dinny," continued her aunt. "All these people—so fatiguin', rememberin' who they aren't. That was his mother, wasn't it? She isn't dead, then."

Dinny was thinking: 'Shall I get another look at Wilfrid?'

"When I was married everybody kissed me," whispered her aunt, "so promiscuous. I knew a girl who married

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to get kissed by his best man. Aggie Tellusson. I wonder. They're comin' back!"

Yes! How well Dinny knew that bride's smile! How could Clare feel it, not married to Wilfrid! She fell in behind her father and mother, alongside Hubert who whispered: "Buck up, old girl, it might be a lot worse!" Divided from him by a secret that absorbed her utterly, Dinny squeezed his arm. And, even as she did so, saw Wilfrid, with his arms folded, looking at her. Again she gave him a swift smile, and then all was hurly-burly, till she was back at Mount Street and Aunt Em saying to her, just within the drawing-room door:

"Stand by me, Dinny, and pinch me in time."

Then came the entry of the guests and her aunt's running commentary.

"It *is* his mother—Kippered. Here's Hen Bentworth! . . . Hen, Wilmet's here, she's got a bone to pick . . . How d'you do? Yes, isn't it—so tirin'. . . . How d'you do? The ring was so well done, don't you think? Conjurers! . . . Dinny, who's this? . . . How do you do? Lovely! No; Cherrell. Not as it's spelled, you know—so awkward! . . . The presents are over there by the man with the boots, tryin' not to. Silly, I think! But they will . . . How d'you do? You *are* Jack Muskham? Lawrence dreamed the other night you were goin' to burst . . . Dinny, get me Fleur, too, she knows everybody."

Dinny went in search of Fleur and found her talking to the bridegroom.

As they went back to the door Fleur said: "I saw Wilfrid Desert in the church. How did he come there?"

Really Fleur was too sharp for anything!

"Here you are!" said Lady Mont. "Which of these three comin' is the duchess? The scraggy one. Ah! . . . How d'you do? Yes, charmin'. Such a bore, weddin's! Fleur, take the duchess to have some presents . . . How d'you do? No, my brother Hilary. He does it well, don't you think? Lawrence says he keeps his eye on the ball. Do have an ice, they're downstairs . . . Dinny, is this one after the presents, d'you think?—Oh! How d'you do, Lord Beevenham? My sister-in-law ought to be doin' this. She ratted. Jerry's in there . . . Dinny, who was it said: 'The drink, the drink!' Hamlet? He said such a lot. Not Hamlet? . . . Oh! How d'you do . . . How d'you do? . . . How d'you do, or don't you? Such a crush! . . . Dinny, your hanky!"

"I've put some powder on it, Auntie."

"There! Have I streaked? . . . How d'you do? Isn't it silly, the whole thing? As if they wanted anybody but themselves, you know . . . Oh! Here's Adrian! Your tie's on one side, dear. Dinny, put it right. How d'you do? Yes, they are. I don't like flowers at funerals—poor things, lyin' there, and dyin' . . . How's your dear dog? You haven't one? Quite! . . . Dinny, you ought to have pinched me . . . How d'you do? How d'you do? I was tellin' my niece she ought to pinch me. Do you get faces right? No. How nice! How d'you do? How d'you do? How d'you do? . . . That's three! Dinny, who's the throw-back just comin'? Oh! . . . How d'you do? So you got here? I thought you were in China . . . Dinny, remind me to ask your uncle if it was China. He gave me such a dirty look. Could I give the rest a miss? Who is it's always sayin' that? Tell Blore 'the drink,' Dinny. Here's a covey! . . . How d'you do? . . . How de do? . . . How do? . . . Do! . . . Do! . . . How? . . . So sweet! . . . Dinny, I want to say: Blast!"

On her errand to Blore Dinny passed Jean talking to Michael, and wondered how any one so vivid and brown had patience to stand about in this crowd. Having found Blore, she came back. Michael's queer face, which she thought grew pleasanter every year, as if from the deepening impress of good feeling, looked strained and unhappy.

"I don't believe it, Jean," she heard him say.

"Well," said Jean, "the bazaars do buzz with rumour. Still, without fire of some sort there's never smoke."

"Oh! yes, there is—plenty. He's back in England, anyway. Fleur saw him in the church to-day. I shall ask him."

"I wouldn't," said Jean: "if it's true he'll probably tell you, and if it isn't, it'll only worry him for nothing."

So! They were talking of Wilfrid. How find out why without appearing to take interest? And suddenly she thought: 'Even if I could, I wouldn't. Anything that matters he must tell me himself. I won't hear it from anyone else.' But she felt disturbed, for instinct was always warning her of something heavy and strange on his mind.

When that long holocaust of sincerity was over and the bride had gone, she subsided into a chair in her uncle's study, the only room which showed no signs of trouble. Her father and mother had started back to Condaford, surprised that she wasn't coming too. It was not like her to cling to London when the tulips were out at home, the lilacs coming on, the apple blossom thickening every day. But the thought of not seeing Wilfrid daily had become a positive pain.

'I *have* got it badly,' she thought, 'worse than I ever believed was possible. Whatever is going to happen to me?'

She was lying back with her eyes closed when her uncle's voice said:

"Ah! Dinny, how pleasant after those hosts of Midian! The mandarin in full feather! Did you know a quarter of them? Why do people go to weddings? A registry office, or under the stars, there's no other way of preserving decency. Your poor aunt has gone to bed. There's a lot to be said for Mohammedanism, except that it's the fashion now to limit it to one wife and she not in Purdah. By the way, there's a story going round that young Desert's become a Moslem. Did he say anything to you about it?"

Dinny raised her startled head.

"I've only twice known it happen to fellows in the East, and they were Frenchmen, and wanted harems."

"Money's the only essential for that, Uncle."

"Dinny, you're getting cynical. Men like to have the sanction of religion. But that wouldn't be Desert's reason; a fastidious creature, if I remember."

"Does religion matter, Uncle, so long as people don't interfere with each other?"

"Well, some Moslems' notions of woman's rights are a little primitive. He's liable to wall her up if she's unfaithful. There was a sheikh when I was in Marakesh—gruesome."

Dinny shuddered.

"From time immemorial," went on Sir Lawrence, "religion has been guilty of the most horrifying deeds that have happened on this earth. I wonder if young Desert has taken up with it to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

get him access to Mecca. I shouldn't think he believes anything. But you never know—it's a queer family."

Dinny thought: 'I can't and won't talk about him.'

"What proportion of people in these days do you think really have religion, Uncle?"

"In northern countries? Very difficult to say. In this country ten to fifteen per cent of the adults, perhaps. In France and southern countries, where there's a peasantry, more, at least on the surface."

"What about the people who came this afternoon?"

"Most of them would be shocked if you said they weren't Christians, and most of them would be still more shocked if you asked them to give half their goods to the poor—and that only makes them Sadducees, was it?"

"Are you a Christian, Uncle?"

"No, my dear; if anything a Confucian, who, as you know, was simply an ethical philosopher. Most of our caste in this country, if they only knew it, are Confucian rather than Christian. Belief in ancestors, and tradition, respect for parents, honesty, moderation of conduct, kind treatment of animals and dependents, absence of self-obtrusion, and stoicism in face of pain and death."

"What more," murmured Dinny, wrinkling her nose, "does one want except the love of beauty?"

"Beauty? That's a matter of temperament."

"But doesn't it divide people more than anything?"

"Yes, but willy nilly. You can't make yourself love a sunset."

" 'You are wise, Uncle Lawrence, the young niece said.' I shall go for a walk and shake the wedding cake down."

"And I shall stay here, Dinny, and sleep the champagne off."

Dinny walked and walked. It seemed an odd thing to be doing alone. But the flowers in the Park were pleasing, and the waters of the Serpentine shone and were still, and the chestnut trees were coming alight. And she let herself go on her mood, and her mood was of love.

VII

Looking back on that second afternoon in Richmond Park, Dinny never knew whether she had betrayed herself before he said so abruptly:

"If you believe in it, Dinny, will you marry me?"

It had so taken her breath away that she sat growing paler and paler, then colour came to her face with a rush.

"I was wondering why you asked me. You know nothing of me."

"You're like the East. One loves it at first sight, or not at all, and one never knows it any better."

Dinny shook her head: "Oh! I am not mysterious."

"I should never get to the end of you; no more than of one of those figures over the staircase in the Louvre. Please answer me, Dinny."

She put her hand in his, nodded, and said: "That must be a record."

At once his lips were on hers, and when they left her lips she fainted.

This was without exception the most singular action of her life so far, and, coming to almost at once, she said so.

"It's the sweetest thing you could have done."

If she had thought his face strange before, what was it now? The lips, generally contemptuous, were parted and quivering, the eyes, fixed on her, glowed; he put up his hand and thrust back his hair, so that she noticed for the first time a scar at the top of his forehead. Sun, moon, stars, and all the works of God, stood still, while they were looking each into the other's face.

At last she said:

"The whole thing is most irregular. There's been no courtship; not even a seduction."

He laughed and put his arm around her. Dinny whispered:

" 'Thus the two young people sat wrapped in their beatitude.' My poor mother!"

"Is she a nice woman?"

"A darling. Luckily she's fond of father."

"What is your father like?"

"The nicest General I know."

"Mine is a hermit. You won't have to realise him. My brother is an ass. My mother ran away when I was three, and I have no sisters. It's going to be hard for you, with a nomadic unsatisfactory brute like me."

" 'Where thou goest, I go.' We seem to be visible to that old gentleman over there. He'll write to the papers about the awful sights to be seen in Richmond Park."

"Never mind!"

"I don't. There's only one first hour. And I was beginning to think I should never have it."

"Never been in love?"

She shook her head.

"How wonderful! When shall it be, Dinny?"

"Don't you think our families ought first to know?"

"I suppose so. They won't want you to marry me."

"Certainly you are my social superior, young Sir."

"One can't be superior to a family that goes back to the twelfth century. We only go back to the fourteenth. A wanderer and a writer of bitter verse. They'll know I shall want to cart you off to the East. Besides I only have fifteen hundred a year, and practically no expectations."

"Fifteen hundred a year! Father may be able to spare me two—he's doing it for Clare."

"Well, thank God there'll be no obstacle from your fortune."

Dinny turned to him, and there was a touching confidence in her eyes.

"Wilfrid, I heard something about your having turned Moslem. That wouldn't matter to me."

"It would matter to them."

His face had become drawn and dark. She clasped his hand tight in both of hers.

"Was that poem 'The Leopard' about yourself?"

He tried to draw his hand away.

"Was it?"

"Yes. Out in Darfur. I recanted to some fanatical Arabs to save my skin. Now you can chuck me." Exerting all her strength, Dinny pulled his hand to her heart.

"What you did or didn't do is nothing. You are you!" To her dismay and yet relief, he fell on his knees and buried his face in her lap.

"Darling!" she said. Protective tenderness almost annulled the wilder sweeter feeling in her.

"Does any one know of that but me?"

"It's known in the bazaars that I've turned Moslem, but it's supposed of my free will."

"I know there are things you would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

die for, Wilfrid, and that's enough. Kiss me!"

The afternoon drew on while they sat there. The shadows of the oak trees splayed up to their log; the crisp edge of the sunlight receded over the young fern; some deer passed moving slowly towards water. The sky of a clear bright blue, with white promising clouds, began to have the evening look; a sappy scent of fern fronds and horse chestnut bloom crept in slow whiffs; and dew began to fall. The sane and heavy air, the grass so green, the blue distance, the branching, ungraceful solidity of the oak trees, made a trysting hour English as lovers ever loved in.

"I shall break into cockney if we sit here much longer," said Dinny, at last; "besides, dear heart, 'fast falls the dewy eve.'" . . .

Late that evening in the drawing room at Mount Street her aunt said suddenly:

"Lawrence, look at Dinny! Dinny, you're in love."

"You take me flat aback, Aunt Em. I am."

"Whom with?"

"Wilfrid Desert."

"I used to tell Michael that young man would get into trouble. Does he love you too?"

"He is good enough to say so."

"Oh! dear. I *will* have some lemonade. Which of you proposed?"

"As a fact, he did."

"His brother has no issue, they say."

"For heaven's sake, Aunt Em!"

"Why not? Kiss me!"

But Dinny was regarding her uncle across her aunt's shoulder. He had said nothing.

Later, he stopped her as she was following out.

"Are your eyes open, Dinny?"

"Yes, this is the ninth day."

"I won't come the heavy uncle; but you know the drawbacks?"

"His religion; Fleur; the East? What else?"

Sir Lawrence shrugged his thin shoulders.

"That business with Fleur sticks in my gizzard, as old Forsyte would have said. One who could do that to the man he has led to the altar, can't have much sense of loyalty."

Colour rose in her cheeks.

"Don't be angry, my dear, we're all too fond of you."

"He's been quite frank about everything, Uncle."

Sir Lawrence sighed.

"Then there's no more to be said, I suppose. But I beg you to look forward before it's irrevocable. There's a species of china which it's almost impossible to mend. And I think you're made of it."

Dinny smiled, and went up to her room, and instantly she began to look back.

The difficulty of imagining the physical intoxication of love was gone. To open one's soul to another seemed no longer impossible. Love stories she had read, love affairs she had watched, all seemed savourless compared with her own. And she had only known him nine days, except for that glimpse ten years ago! Had she had what was called a complex all this time? Or was love always sudden like this? A wild flower seeding on a wild wind?

Long she sat half dressed, her hands clasped between her knees, her head drooping, steeped in the narcotic of remembrance, and with a strange feeling that all the lovers in the world were sitting within her on that bed bought at Pullbred's in the Tottenham Court Road.

VIII

Condaford resented this business of love, and, with a fine rain, was sorrowing for the loss of its two daughters.

Dinny found her father and mother elaborately making no bones over the loss of Clare, and only hoped they would continue the motion in her own case. Feeling, as she said, 'Very towny,' she prepared for the ordeal of disclosure by waterproofing herself and going for a tramp. Hubert and Jean were expected in time for dinner, and she wished to kill all her birds with one stone. The rain on her face, the sappy fragrance, the call of the cuckoos, and that state of tree when each has leaves in different stage of opening, freshened her body but brought a little ache to her heart. Entering a covert, she walked along a ride. The trees were beech and hazel with here and there an English yew, the soil being chalky. A woodpecker's constant tap was the only sound, for the rain was not yet heavy enough for leaf dripping to have started. Since babyhood she had been abroad but three times—to Italy, to Paris, to the Pyrenees, and had always come home more in love with England and Condaford than ever. Henceforth her path would lie, she knew not where; there would no doubt be sand, fig trees, figures by wells, flat roofs, voices calling the Muezzin, eyes looking through veils. But, surely, Wilfrid would feel the charm of Condaford and not mind if they spent time there now and then. His father lived in a show place, half shut up and never shown, which gave everyone the blues. And that, apart from London and Eton, was all he seemed to know of England, for he had been four years away in the war and eight years away in the East.

'For me to discover England to him,' she thought; 'for him to discover the East to me.'

A gale of last November had brought down some beech trees. Looking at their wide flat roots exposed, Dinny remembered Fleur saying that timber selling was the only way to meet death duties. But Dad was only sixty-two! Jean's cheeks the night of their arrival, when Aunt Em quoted the 'multiply exceedingly.' A child coming! Surely a son. Jean was the sort to have sons. Another generation of Cherrells in direct line! If Wilfrid and she had a child! What then? One could not wander about with babes. A tremor of insecurity went through her. The future how uncharted! A squirrel crossed close to her still figure, and scampered up a trunk. Smiling, she watched it, lithe, red, bushy-tailed. Thank God Wilfrid cared for animals! 'When to God's fondouk the donkeys are taken.' Condaford, its bird life, woods and streams, mullions, magnolias, fantails, pastures green, surely he would like it! But her father and mother, Hubert and Jean; would he like them? Would they like him? They would not—too unshackled, too fitful, and too bitter; all that was best in him he hid away, as if ashamed of it; and his yearning for beauty, they would not understand! And his change of religion, even though they would not know what he had told her, would seem to them strange and disconcerting! Condaford Grange had neither butler nor electric light, and Dinny chose the moment when the maids had set decanters and dessert on the polished chestnut wood, lit by candles.

"Sorry to be personal," she said, quite suddenly; "but I'm engaged."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No one answered. Each of those four was accustomed to say and think—not always the same thing—that Dinny was the ideal person to marry, so none was happier for the thought that she was going to be married. Then Jean said:

"To whom, Dinny?"

"Wilfrid Desert, the second son of Lord Mullyon—he was Michael's best man."

"Oh! but——!"

Dinny was looking hard at the other three. Her father's face was impassive, as was natural, for he did not know the young man from Adam; her mother's gentle features wore a fluttered and enquiring look; Hubert's an air as if he were biting back vexation.

Then Lady Cherrell said: "But, Dinny, when did you meet him?"

"Only ten days ago, but I've seen him every day since. I'm afraid it's a first sight case like yours, Hubert. We remembered each other from Michael's wedding."

Hubert looked at his plate. "You know he's become a Moslem," he said: "or so they say in Khartoum."

Dinny nodded.

"What!" said the General.

"That's the story, Sir."

"Why?"

"I don't know, I've never seen him. He's been a lot about in the East."

On the point of saying: 'One might just as well be Moslem as Christian, if one's not a believer,' Dinny stopped. It was scarcely a testimonial to character.

"I can't understand a man changing his religion," said the General, bluntly.

"There doesn't seem to be much enthusiasm," murmured Dinny.

"My dear, how can there be when we don't know him?"

"No, of course, Mother. May I ask him down? He *can* support a wife; and Aunt Em says his brother has no issue."

"Dinny!" said the General.

"I'm not serious, darling."

"What is serious," said Hubert, "is that he seems to be a sort of Bedouin—always wandering about."

"Two can wander about, Hubert."

"You've always said you hate to be away from Condaford."

"I remember when you said you couldn't see anything in marriage, Hubert. And I'm sure both you and Father said that at one time, Mother. Have any of you said it since?"

"Cat, Dinny!"

With those simple words Jean closed the scene.

But at bed time in her mother's room, Dinny said:

"May I ask Wilfrid down then?"

"Of course, when you like. We shall be only too anxious to see him."

"I know it's a shock, Mother, coming so soon after Clare; still, you did expect me to go some time."

Lady Cherrell sighed. "I suppose so."

"I forgot to say that he's a poet, a real one."

"A poet?" repeated her mother, as if this had put the finishing touch to her disquiet.

"There are quite a lot in Westminster Abbey. But don't worry, *he'll* never be."

"Difference in religion is serious, Dinny, especially when it comes to children."

"Why, Mother? No child has any religion worth speaking of till it's grown up, and then it can choose for itself. Besides, by the time my children, if I have any, are grown up, the question will be academic."

"Dinny!"

"It's nearly so even now, except in ultra-religious circles. Ordinary people's religion becomes more and more just ethical."

"I don't know enough about it to say, and I don't think you do."

"Mother, dear, stroke my head."

"Oh! Dinny, I do hope you've chosen wisely."

"Darling, it chose me."

That she perceived was not the way to reassure her mother, but as she did not know one, she took her good-night kiss and went away.

In her room she sat down and wrote:

"Condaford Grange: Friday:

"Darling,

"This is positively and absolutely my first love letter, so you see I don't know how to express myself. I think I will just say 'I love you' and leave it at that. I have spread the good tiding. It has, of course, left them guessing, and anxious to see you here as soon as possible. When will you come? Once you are here the whole thing will seem to me less like a very real and very lovely dream. This is quite a simple place. Whether we should live in style if we could, I can't say. But three maids, a groom chauffeur, and two gardeners are all our staff. I believe you will like my mother, and I don't believe you will get on very well with my father or brother, though I expect his wife Jean will tickle your poetic fancy, she's such a vivid creature. Condaford itself I'm sure you'll love. It has the real 'old' feeling. We can go riding; and I want to walk and talk with you and show you my pet nooks and corners. I hope the sun will shine, as you love it so much. For me almost any sort of day does down here; and absolutely any will do if I can be with you. The room you will have is away by itself and supernaturally quiet; you go up to it by five twisty steps, and it's called the priest's room because Anthony Charwell, brother of the Gilbert who owned Condaford under Elizabeth, was walled up there, and fed from a basket let down nightly to his window. He was a conspicuous Catholic priest and Gilbert was a Protestant, but he put his brother first, as any decent body would. When he'd been there three months they took the wall down one night, and got him across country all the way south to the Beaulieu river and 'aboard the lugger.' The wall was put up again to save appearances; and only done away with by my great-grandfather, who was the last of us to have any money to speak of. It seemed to prey on his nerves, so he got rid of it. They still speak of him in the village, probably because he drove four-in-hand. There's a bath room at the bottom of the twisty steps. The window was enlarged, of course, and the view's jolly from it, especially now, at lilac and apple blossom time. My own room, if it interests you to know, is somewhat cloistral and narrow, but it looks straight over the lawns to the hill-rise and the woods beyond. I've had it ever since I was seven, and I wouldn't change for anything, until you're making me

'brooches and toys for my delight
Of birds' song at morning and starshine
at night.'

I almost think that little 'Stevenson' is my favourite poem; so you see, in spite of my homing tendency, I must have a streak of the wanderer in me. Dad, by the way, has a great feeling for Nature, likes beasts and birds and trees.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I think most soldiers do—it's rather odd. But, of course, their love is on the precise and knowledgeable rather than the æsthetic side. Any dreaminess they incline to look on as 'a bit barmy.' I have been wondering whether to put my copies of your poems under their noses. On the whole I don't think; they might take you too seriously. There is always something about a person more ingratiating than his writings. I don't expect to sleep much to-night, for this is the first day that I haven't seen you since the world began. Good-night, my dear, be blessed and take my kiss.

YOUR DINNY.

"P.S. I have looked you out the photo where I approximate most to the angels, or rather where my nose turns up least—to send to-morrow. In the meantime here are two snaps. And when, Sir, do I get some of you?

D."

And that was the end of this to her far from perfect day.

IX

Sir Lawrence Mont, recently elected to Burton's Club, whereon he had resigned from the Aeroplane, retaining besides only 'Snooks' (so-called), The Coffee House and The Parthenæum, was accustomed to remark that, allowing himself another ten years of life, it would cost him twelve shillings and sixpence every time he went into any of them.

He entered Burton's, however, on the afternoon after Dinny had told him of her engagement, took up a list of the members, and turned to D. 'Hon. Wilfrid Desert.' Quite natural, seeing the Club's pretension to the monopoly of travellers. "Does Mr. Desert ever come in here?" he said to the porter.

"Yes, Sir Lawrence, he's been in this last week; before that I don't remember him for years."

"Usually abroad. When does he come in as a rule?"

"For dinner, mostly, Sir Lawrence."

"I see. Is Mr. Muskham in?"

The porter shook his head. "Newmarket to-day, Sir Lawrence."

"Oh! Ah! How on earth you remember everything!"

"Matter of 'abit, Sir Lawrence."

"Wish I had it." Hanging up his hat, he stood for a moment before the tape in the hall. Unemployment and taxation going up all the time, and more money to spend on cars and sports than ever. A pretty little problem! He then sought the Library as the room where he was least likely to see anybody; and the first body he saw was that of Jack Muskham talking in a voice, hushed to the level of the locality, to a thin dark little man in a corner.

'That,' thought Sir Lawrence, cryptically, 'explains to me why I never find a lost collar-stud. My friend the porter was so certain Jack would be at Newmarket, that he took him for some one else when he came in.'

Reaching down a volume of Burton's "Arabian Nights," he rang for tea. He was attending to neither when the two in the corner rose and came up to him.

"Don't get up, Lawrence," said Jack Muskham with some languor; "Telfourd Yule, my cousin Sir Lawrence Mont."

"I've read thrillers of yours, Mr. Yule," said Sir Lawrence, and thought: 'Queer-looking little cuss!'

The thin dark smallish man, with a face rather like a monkey's, grinned. "Truth whips fiction out of the field," he said.

"Yule," said Jack Muskham, with his air of superiority to space and time, "has been out in Arabia, going into the question of how to corkscrew a really pure-strain Arab mare or two out of them for use here. It's always baffled us, you know. Stallions, yes; mares never. It's the same now at Nejd as when Palgrave wrote. Still we think we've got a rise. The owner of the best strain wants an aeroplane, and if we throw in a billiard table, we believe he'll part with at least one daughter of the sun."

"Good God!" said Sir Lawrence: "By what base means. We're all Jesuits, Jack!"

"Yule has seen some queer things out there. By the way, there's one I want to talk about. May we sit down?"

He stretched his long body out in a long chair, and the dark little man perched himself on another, with his black twinkling eyes fixed on Sir Lawrence, who had come to uneasy attention without knowing why.

"When," said Jack Muskham, "Yule here was in the Arabian desert, he heard a vague yarn among some Bedouins about an Englishman having been held up somewhere by Arabs and forced to become a Moslem. He had rather a row with them, saying no Englishman would do that. But when he was back in Egypt he went flying into the Libyan desert, met another lot of Bedouins coming from the south, and came on precisely the same yarn, only more detailed, because they said it happened in Darfur, and they even had the man's name—Desert. Then, when he was up in Khartoum, Yule found it was common talk that young Desert had changed his religion. Naturally he put two and two together. But there's all the difference in the world, of course, between voluntarily swapping religions and doing it at the pistol's point. An Englishman who does that lets down the lot of us."

Sir Lawrence, who during this recital had tried every motion for his monocle with which he was acquainted, dropped it and said: "But, my dear Jack, if a man is rash enough to become a Mohammedan in a Mohammedan country, do you suppose for a minute that gossip won't say he was forced to?"

Yule, who had wriggled on to the very verge of his chair, said:

"*I* thought that; but the second account was extremely positive. Even to the month and the name of the Sheikh who forced the recantation; and I found that Mr. Desert had in fact returned from Darfur soon after the month mentioned. There may be nothing in it; but whether there is or not, I needn't tell you that an undenied story of that kind grows by telling and does a lot of harm, not only to the man himself, but to our prestige. There seems to me a sort of obligation on one to let Mr. Desert know what the Bedawi are spreading about him."

"Well, he's over here," said Sir Lawrence, gravely.

"I know," said Jack Muskham, "I saw him the other day; and he's a member of this Club."

Through Sir Lawrence were passing waves of infinite dismay. What a sequel to Dinny's ill-starred announcement. To his ironic, detached personality, capricious in its likings, Dinny was precious. She embroidered in a queer way his plain-washed feelings about women; as a young man he might even have been in love with her, instead of being merely her uncle by marriage. During this silence he was fully conscious that both the other two were thoroughly uncomfortable. And the knowledge of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their disquiet deepened the significance of the matter in an odd way.

At last he said: "Desert was my boy's best man. I'd like to talk to Michael about it, Jack. Mr. Yule will say nothing further at present, I hope."

"Not on your life," said Yule. "I hope to God there's nothing in it. I like his verse."

"And you, Jack?"

"I don't care for the look of him; but I'd refuse to believe that of an Englishman till it was plainer than the nose on my face, which is saying a good bit. You and I must be getting on, Yule, if we're to catch that train to Royston."

This speech of Jack Muskham's further disturbed Sir Lawrence, left alone in his chair. It seemed so entirely to preclude leniency of judgment among the 'pukka sahibs' if the worst were true.

At last he rose, found a small volume, sat down again and turned its pages. The volume was Sir Alfred Lyall's "Verses Written in India," and he looked for the poem called: "Theology in Extremis."

He read it through, restored the volume, and stood rubbing his chin. Written, of course, some forty years ago, and yet doubtful if its sentiments were changed by an iota! There was that story of the Corporal in the Buffs who, brought before a Chinese General and told to 'kow-tow' or die, said: 'We don't do that sort of thing in the Buffs,' and died. Yes! That was the standard even to-day, among people of any caste or with any tradition. The war had thrown up innumerable instances. Could young Desert really have betrayed the shibboleths? It seemed improbable. And yet, in spite of his excellent war record, might there be a streak of yellow in him? Or was it, rather, that at times a flow of revolting bitterness carried him on to complete cynicism, so that he flouted almost for the joy of flouting?

With a strong mental effort Sir Lawrence tried to place himself in a like dilemma. Not being a believer, his success was limited to the thought: 'I should immensely dislike being dictated to in such a matter.' Aware that this was inadequate, he went down to the hall, shut himself up in a box and rang up Michael's house. Then, feeling that if he lingered in the Club he might run into Desert himself, he took a cab to South Square.

Michael had just come in from the House; they met in the hall; and, with the instinct that Fleur, however acute, was not a fit person to share this particular consultation, Sir Lawrence demanded to be taken to his son's study. He commenced by announcing Dinny's engagement, which Michael heard with as strange a mixture of gratification and disquietude as could be seen on human visage.

"What a little cat, keeping it so dark!" he said. "Fleur did say something about her being too limpid just now; but I never thought— One's got so used to Dinny being single. To Wilfrid too? Well, I hope the old son has exhausted the East."

"There's this question of his religion," said Sir Lawrence gravely.

"I don't know that that much matters, Dinny's not fervent. But I never thought Wilfrid cared enough to change his. It rather staggered me."

"There's a story."

When his father had finished, Michael's ears stood out and his face looked haggard.

"You know him better than any one," Sir Lawrence concluded: "What do you think?"

"I hate to say it, but it might be true. It might even be natural for *him;* but no one would ever understand why. This is pretty ghastly, Dad, with Dinny involved."

"Before we fash ourselves, my dear, we must find out if it's true. Could you go to him?"

"In old days—easily."

Sir Lawrence nodded: "Yes, I know all about that, but it's a long time ago."

Michael smiled faintly. "I never knew whether you spotted that, but I rather thought so. I've seen very little of Wilfrid since he went East. Still, I could—" He stopped, and added: "If it *is* true, he must have told Dinny. He couldn't ask her to marry him with that untold."

Sir Lawrence shrugged. "If yellow in one way, why not in the other?"

"Wilfrid is one of the most perverse, complex, unintelligible natures one could come across. To judge him by ordinary standards is a wash-out. But if he *has* told Dinny, she'll never tell us."

And they stared at each other.

"Mind you," said Michael, "there's a streak of the heroic in him. It comes out in the wrong places. That's why he's a poet."

Sir Lawrence began twisting at an eyebrow, always a sign that he had reached decision.

"The thing's got to be faced; it's not in human nature for a sleeping dog like that to be allowed to lie. I don't care about young Desert——"

"I do," said Michael.

"It's Dinny I'm thinking of."

"So am I. But there again, Dad, Dinny will do what she will do, and you needn't think we can deflect her."

"It's one of the most unpleasant things," said Sir Lawrence, slowly, "that I've ever come across. Well, my boy, are you going to see him, or shall I?"

"I'll do it," said Michael, and sighed.

"Will he tell you the truth?"

"Yes. Won't you stay to dinner?"

Sir Lawrence shook his head.

"Daren't face Fleur with this on my mind. Needless to say, no one ought to know until you've seen him, not even she."

"No. Dinny still with you?"

"She's gone back to Condaford."

"Her people!" and Michael whistled.

Her people! The thought remained with him all through a dinner during which Fleur discussed the future of Kit. She was in favour of his going to Harrow because Michael and his father had been at Winchester. He was down for both and the matter had not yet been decided.

"All your mother's people," she said, "were at Harrow. Winchester seems to me so superior and dry. And they never get any notoriety. If you hadn't been at Winchester, you'd have been an under secretary by now."

"D'you want Kit to have notoriety?"

"Yes, the nice sort, of course, like your Uncle Hilary. You know, Michael, Bart's a dear, but I prefer the Cherrell side of your family."

"Well, I was wondering," said Michael, "whether the Cherrells weren't too straight-necked and servicey for anything."

"Yes, they're that, but they've got a quirk in them, and they look like gentlemen."

"I believe," said Michael, "that you really want Kit to go to Harrow because they play at Lord's."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fleur straightened her own neck.

"Well, I do. I should have chosen Eton, only it's so obvious, and I hate light blue."

"Well," said Michael, "I'm prejudiced in favour of my own school, so the choice is up to you. A school that produced Uncle Adrian will do for me, anyway."

"No school produced your Uncle Adrian, dear," said Fleur; "he's palæolithic. The Cherrells are the oldest strain in Kit's make-up, anyway, and I should like to breed to it, as Mr. Jack Muskham would say. Which reminds me that when I saw him at Clare's wedding he wanted us to come down and see his stud farm at Royston. I should like to. He's like an advertisement for shooting capes—divine shoes and marvellous control of his facial muscles."

Michael nodded.

"Jack's an example of so much stamp on the coin, that there's hardly any coin behind it."

"Don't you believe it, my dear. There's plenty of metal at the back."

"The pukka sahib," said Michael. "I never can make up my mind whether that article is to the good or to the bad. The Cherrells are the best type of it, because there's no manner to them as there is to Jack; but even with them I always have the feeling of too much in heaven and earth that isn't dreamed of in their philosophy."

"We can't all have divine sympathy, Michael."

Michael looked at her fixedly. He decided against malicious intent and went on: "I never know where understanding and tolerance ought to end."

"That's where men are inferior to us. We wait for the mark to fix itself; we trust our nerves. Men don't, poor things. Luckily you've a streak of woman in you, Michael. Give me a kiss. Mind Coaker, he's very sudden. It's decided, then: Kit goes to Harrow."

"If there's a Harrow to go to by the time he's of age."

"Don't be foolish. No constellations are more fixed than the public schools. Look at the way they flourished on the war."

"They won't flourish on the next war."

"There mustn't be one, then."

"Under pukka sahibism it couldn't be avoided."

"My dear, you don't suppose that keeping our word and all that was not just varnish. We simply feared German preponderance."

Michael rumpled his hair.

"It was a good instance, anyway, of what I said about there being more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamed of by the pukka sahib; yes, and of many situations that he's not adequate to handle."

Fleur yawned.

"We badly want a new dinner service, Michael."

X

After dinner Michael set forth, without saying where he was going. Since the death of his father-in-law, and the disclosure then made to him about Fleur and Jon Forsyte, his relations with her had been the same with a slight but deep difference. He was no longer a tied but a free agent in his own house. Not a word had ever been spoken between them on a matter now nearly four years old, nor had there been in his mind any doubt about her since; the infidelity was scotched and buried. But though outwardly the same, he was inwardly emancipated, and she knew it. In this matter of Wilfrid, for instance, his father's warning had not been needed. He would not have told her of it anyway. Not because he did not trust her discretion—he could always trust that—but because he secretly felt that in a matter such as this he would not get any real help from her.

'Wilfrid's in love,' he thought, 'so he ought to be in by ten, unless he's got an attack of verse; but even then you can't write poetry in this traffic, or in a club, the atmosphere stops the flow.' He crossed Pall Mall and threaded the maze of narrow streets dedicated to unattached manhood till he came to Piccadilly, quiet before its storm of after-theatre traffic. Passing up a side street devoted to those male ministering angels—tailors, bookmakers, and moneylenders—he rounded into Cork Street. It was ten o'clock exactly when he paused before the well-remembered house. Opposite was the gallery where he had first met Fleur, and he stood for a moment almost dizzy from past feelings. For three years, before Wilfrid's queer infatuation for Fleur had broken it all up, he had been Wilfrid's fidus Achates. 'Regular David and Jonathan stunt,' he thought, and all his old feelings came welling up as he ascended the stairs.

The monastic visage of the henchman Stack relaxed at sight of him.

"Mr. Mont? Pleasure to see you, Sir."

"And how are you, Stack?"

"A little older, Sir; otherwise in fine shape, thank you. Mr. Desert *is* in."

Michael resigned his hat, and entered.

Wilfrid, lying on the divan in a dark dressing-gown, sat up.

"Hallo! I'm not going to say 'This is great!' "

"How are you, Wilfrid?"

"I'm not going to say 'fine'; anything else you like. Stack! Drinks."

"Congratulations, old man!"

"I met her first at your wedding, you know."

"Ten years ago, nearly. She hasn't the hair she had then. You've plucked the flower of our family, Wilfrid; we're all in love with Dinny."

"I won't talk about her, but I think the more."

"Any verse, old man?"

"Yes, a booklet going in to-morrow, same publisher. Remember the first?"

"Don't I? My only scoop."

"This is better. There's one that *is* a poem."

Stack re-entered with a tray.

"Help yourself, Michael."

Michael poured out a little brandy and diluted it but slightly. Then with a cigarette he sat down.

"When's it to be?"

"Registry office, as soon as possible."

"Oh! And then?"

"Dinny wants to show me England. While there's any sun, I suppose we shall hang around."

"Going back to Syria?"

Desert wriggled on his cushions.

"I don't know: further afield, perhaps—she'll say."

Michael looked at his feet, beside which on the Persian rug some cigarette ash had fallen.

"Old man," he said.

"Well?"

"D'you know a bird called Telfourd Yule?"

"His name—writer of sorts."

"He's just come back from Arabia and the Soudan; he brought a yarn with him." Without raising his eyes, he was conscious that Wilfrid was sitting upright.

"It concerns you; and it's queer and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

damaging. He thinks you ought to know."

"Well?"

Michael uttered an involuntary sigh.

"Shortly: The Bedouin are saying that your conversion to Islam was at the pistol's point. He was told the yarn in Arabia, and again in the Libyan desert, with the name of the Sheikh, and the place in Darfur, and the Englishman's name." And, still without looking up, he knew that Wilfrid's eyes were fixed on him, and that there was sweat on his forehead.

"Well?"

"He wanted you to know, so he told my Dad at the Club this afternoon, and Bart told me. I said I'd see you about it. Forgive me."

Then, in the silence, Michael raised his eyes. What a strange, beautiful, tortured, compelling face!

"Nothing to forgive, it's true."

"My dear old man!" The words burst from Michael, but no others would follow.

Desert got up, went to a drawer and took out a manuscript.

"Here, read this!"

During the twenty minutes while Michael was reading the poem, there was not a sound, except from the sheets being turned. Michael put them down at last.

"Magnificent!"

"Yes, but you'd never have done it."

"I haven't an idea what I should have done."

"Oh! yes, you have. You'd never have let sophistication and God knows what stifle your first instinct as I did. My first instinct was to say: 'Shoot and be damned,' and I wish to God I had kept to it, then I shouldn't be here. The queer thing is: If he'd threatened torture, I'd have stood out. Yet I'd much rather be killed than tortured."

"Torture's caddish."

"He wasn't a cad. Fanatics aren't. If he had bullied me I'd have sent him to hell. But he didn't—he didn't want to shoot me a bit; he begged me not to make him—stood there with the pistol and begged me. His brother's a friend of mine. By God! Fanaticism's a rum thing! He stood there ready to loose off, begging me." Desert laughed. "Damned human. I can see his eyes now. He was under a vow. He suffered right enough. I never saw a man so relieved."

"There's nothing of that in the poem," said Michael.

"Being sorry for your executioner is hardly an excuse. I'm not proud of sentimentalism, especially when it saves your life. Besides, I don't know if that was the reason. Religion if you haven't got it is a fake. To walk out into everlasting dark for the sake of a fake. If I must die I want a reality to die for."

"You don't think," said Michael miserably, "that you'd be justified in denying the thing?"

"I'll deny nothing. If it's come out, I'll stand by it."

"Does Dinny know?"

"Yes. She's read the poem. I didn't mean to tell her, but I did. She behaved as people don't. Marvellous."

"Yes. I'm not sure that you oughtn't to deny it for her sake."

"No, but I ought to give her up."

"She would have something to say about that. If Dinny's in love, it's head over ears, Wilfrid."

"Same here!"

Overcome by the bleakness of the situation, Michael got up and helped himself to more brandy.

"Exactly!" said Desert, following him with his eyes: "Imagine if the Press gets hold of it!" and he laughed again.

"I gather," said Michael, with a spurt of cheerfulness, "that it was only in the desert both times that Yule heard the story."

"What's in the desert to-day is in the bazaars to-morrow. It's no use, I shall have to face the music."

Michael put a hand on his shoulder. "Count on me, anyway. I suppose the bold way is the only way. But I feel all you're up against."

"Yellow. Labelled: 'Yellow'—might give any show away. And they'll be right."

"Rot!" said Michael.

Wilfrid went on without heeding: "And yet my whole soul revolts against dying for a gesture that I don't believe in. Legends and superstitions—I hate the lot. I'd sooner die to give them a death-blow than to keep them alive. If a man tried to force me to torture an animal, to hang another man, to violate a woman, of course I'd die rather than do it. But why the hell should I die to gratify those whom I despise for believing outworn creeds that have been responsible for more misery in the world than any other mortal thing? Why? Eh?"

Michael had recoiled before the passion in this outburst, and was standing miserable and glum.

"Symbol," he muttered.

"Symbol! For conduct that's worth standing for, honesty, humanity, courage, I hope I'd stand; I went through with the war, anyway; but why should I stand for what I look on as dead wood?"

"It simply mustn't come out," said Michael violently; "I loathe the idea of a lot of swabs looking down their noses at you."

Wilfrid shrugged. "I look down my nose at myself, I assure you. Never stifle your instinct, Michael. It gets back on you."

"But what are you going to *do?*"

"What does it matter what I do? Things will be as they will be. Nobody will understand, or side with me if they did understand. Why should they? I don't even side with myself."

"I think lots of people might now-a-days."

"The sort I wouldn't be seen dead with. No, I'm outcast."

"And Dinny?"

"I'll settle that with her."

Michael took up his hat.

"If there's anything I can do, count on me. Good-night, old man!"

"Good-night, and thanks!"

Michael was out of the street before any thinking power returned to him. Wilfrid had been caught, as it were, in a snare! One could see how his rebellious contempt for convention and its types had blinded him to the normal view. But one could not dissociate this or that from the general image of an Englishman; betrayal of one feature would be looked on as betrayal of the whole. As for that queer touch of compassion for his would-be executioner, who would see that who didn't know Wilfrid? The affair was bitter and tragic. The 'yellow' label would be stuck on indiscriminately for all eyes to see.

'Of course,' thought Michael, 'he'll have his supporters—the advanced crowd, and Bolshies generally, and that'll make him feel worse than ever.' Nothing was more galling than to be backed up by people you didn't understand, and who didn't understand you.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And how was support like that going to help Dinny, more detached from it even than Wilfrid. The whole thing was——!

And with that blunt reflection he crossed Bond Street and went down Hay Hill into Berkeley Square. If he did not see his father before he went home, he would not sleep.

At Mount Street his mother and father were receiving a special pale negus, warranted to cause slumber, from the hands of Blore.

"Catherine?" said Lady Mont: "Measles?"

"No, Mother; I want to have a talk with Dad."

"About that young man—changin' his religion. He always gave me a pain—defyin' the lightnin', and that."

Michael stared. "It *is* about Wilfrid."

"Em," said Sir Lawrence, "this is dead private. Well, Michael?"

"The story's true, he doesn't and won't deny it. And Dinny knows."

"What story?" asked Lady Mont.

"He recanted to some fanatical Arabs on pain of death."

"What a bore!"

Michael thought swiftly: 'My God! If only everyone would take that view!'

"D'you mean, then," said Sir Lawrence, gravely, "that I've got to tell Yule there's no defence?"

Michael nodded.

"But if so, dear boy, it won't stop there."

"No, but he's reckless."

"The lightnin'," said Lady Mont, suddenly.

"Exactly, Mother. He's written a poem on it, and a jolly good one it is. He's sending it in a new volume to his publisher to-morrow. But, Dad, at any rate, get Yule and Jack Muskham to keep their mouths shut. After all, what business is it of theirs?"

Sir Lawrence shrugged the thin shoulders which at seventy-two were only beginning to suggest age.

"There are two questions, Michael, and so far as I can see they're quite separate. The first is how to muzzle club gossip. The second concerns Dinny and her people. You say Dinny knows; but her people don't, except ourselves; and as she didn't tell us, she won't tell them. Now that's not fair. And it's not wise," he went on, without waiting for an answer, "because this thing's dead certain to come out later, and they'd never forgive Desert for marrying her without letting them know. I wouldn't myself, it's too serious."

"It *is* agitatin'," murmured Lady Mont: "Ask Adrian."

"Better Hilary," said Sir Lawrence.

Michael broke in: "That second question, Dad, seems to me entirely up to Dinny. She must be told that the story's in the wind, then either she or Wilfrid will let her people know."

"If only she'd let him drop her. Surely he can't want to go on with it, with this story going about?"

"I don't see Dinny droppin' him," murmured Lady Mont. "She's been too long pickin' him up. Love's young dream."

"Wilfrid said he knew he ought to give her up. Oh! damn!"

"Come back to question one, then, Michael. I can try, but I'm very doubtful, especially if this poem is coming out. What is it, a justification?"

"Or explanation."

"Bitter and rebellious, like his early stuff?"

Michael nodded.

"Well, they might keep quiet out of charity, but they'll never stomach that sort of attitude, if I know Jack Muskham. He hates the bravado of modern scepticism like poison."

"We can't tell what's going to happen in any direction, but it seems to me we ought all to play hard for delay."

"Hope the Hermit," murmured Lady Mont. "Good-night, dear boy; I'm goin' up. Mind the dog—he's not been out."

"Well, I'll do what I can," said Sir Lawrence.

Michael received his mother's kiss, wrung his father's hand, and went.

He walked home, uneasy and sore at heart, for this concerned two people of whom he was very fond, and he could see no issue that was not full of suffering to both. And continually there came back to him the thought: 'What should I have done in Wilfrid's place?' And he concluded, as he walked, that no man could tell what he would do if he were in the shoes of another man. And so, in the Spring wind of a night not devoid of beauty, he came to South Square and let himself in.

XI

Wilfrid sat in his rooms with two letters before him, one that he had just written to Dinny, and one that he had just received from her. He stared at the snapshots, and tried to think clearly, and since he had been trying to think clearly ever since Michael's visit of the previous evening, he was the less successful. Why had he chosen this particular moment to fall really in love, to feel that he had found the one person with whom he could bear to think of permanent companionship? He had never intended to marry, he had never supposed he would feel towards women anything but a transient urge that soon died in satisfaction. Even at the height of his infatuation with Fleur he had never supposed it would last. On the whole he was profoundly sceptical about women, as about religion, patriotism, or the qualities popularly attributed to the Englishman. He had thought himself armoured in scepticism, but in his armour was a joint so weak that he had received a fatal thrust. With bitter amusement he perceived that the profound loneliness, left by that experience in Darfur, had started in him an involuntary craving for spiritual companionship of which Dinny had, as involuntarily, availed herself. The thing that should have kept them apart had brought them together.

After Michael had left he had spent half the night going over and over it, and always coming back to the crude thought that, when all was said and done, he would be set down as a coward. And yet, but for Dinny, would even that matter? What did he care for society and its opinion? What did he care for England and the English? Even if they had prestige, was it deserved, any more than the prestige of any other country? The war had shown all countries and their inhabitants to be pretty much alike, capable of the same heroisms, basenesses, endurance, and absurdities. The war had shown mob feeling in every country to be equally narrow, void of discrimination, and generally contemptible. He was a wanderer by nature, and even if England and the nearer East were closed to him, the world was wide, the sun shone in many places, the stars wheeled over one, books could be read, women had beauty, flowers scent, tobacco its flavour, music its moving power, coffee its fragrance, horses and dogs and birds were the same seductive creatures, and thought and feeling brought an urge to rhythmic expression, almost wherever one went. Save for Dinny he could strike his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tent and move out, and let tongues wag behind him! And now he couldn't! Or could he? Was he not, indeed, in honour bound to? How could he saddle her with a mate at whom fingers were pointed? If she had inspired him with flaming desire, it would have been much simpler, they could have had their fling and parted, and no one the worse. But he had a very different feeling for her. She was like a well of sweet water met with in a desert; a flower with a scent coming up among the dry vegetation of the wilderness. She gave him the reverent longing that some tunes and pictures inspire; roused the same ache of pleasure as the scent of new-mown grass. She was a cool refreshment to a spirit sun-dried, wind-dried and dark. Was he to give her up because of this damned business?

In the morning when he woke the same confused struggle of feeling had gone on. He had spent the afternoon writing her a letter, and had barely finished it when her first love letter came. And he sat now with the two before him.

'I can't send this,' he thought suddenly, 'it goes over and over and gets nowhere. Rotten!' He tore it up, and read her letter a third time.

'Impossible!' he thought; 'to go down there! God and the King and the rest of it. Impossible!' And seizing a piece of paper, he wrote:

"Cork Street. Saturday.

"Bless you for your letter. Come up here to lunch Monday. We must talk. Wilfrid."

Having sent Stack out with this missive, he felt a little more at peace. . . .

Dinny did not receive this note till Monday morning, there being naturally no Sunday post at Condaford. The last two days had been spent by her in avoiding any mention of Wilfrid, listening to Hubert and Jean's account of their life in the Soudan; walking and inspecting the state of trees with her father, copying his income tax return, and going to church with him and her mother. The tacit silence about her engagement was very characteristic of a family whose members were mutually devoted and accustomed to spare each other's feelings; it was all the more ominous.

After reading Wilfrid's note she said to herself blankly: 'For a love letter it's not a love letter.' And she said to her mother:

"Wilfrid's shy of coming, dear. I must go up and talk to him. If I can, I will bring him down with me. If I can't, I'll try and arrange for you to see him at Mount Street. He's lived in the desert so much that seeing people is a real strain."

Lady Cherrell's answer was a sigh, but it meant more to Dinny than words; she took her mother's hand and said: "Cheer up, Mother dear. It's something that I'm happy, isn't it?"

"That would be everything, Dinny."

Dinny was too conscious of implications in the 'would be' to answer.

She walked to the station, reached London at noon, and set out for Cork Street across the Park. The day was fine, the sun shone; spring was established to the full, with lilac and with tulips, young green of plane tree leaves, songs of birds and the freshness of the grass. But though she looked in tune, she suffered from presentiment. Why she should feel so, going to a private lunch with her lover, she could not have explained. There could be but few people in all the great town at such an hour of day with prospect before them so closely joyful; but Dinny was not deceived: all was not well—she knew it. Being before her time, she stopped at Mount Street to titivate. According to Blore, Sir Lawrence was out, but his lady in. Dinny sent up the message that she might be back to tea.

Passing the pleasant smell at the corner of Burlington Street, she had that peculiar feeling, experienced by all at times, of having once been someone else, which accounts for so much belief in the transmigration of souls.

'It only means,' she thought, 'something I've forgotten. I never really was the French washerwoman of Marie Antoinette. Oh! here's the turning!' And her heart began to beat.

She was nearly breathless when Stack opened the door to her. "Lunch will be ready in five minutes, Miss." His eyes, dark, prominent above his jutting nose, and yet reflective, and the curly benevolence of his lips, always gave her the impression that he was confessing her before she had anything to confess. He opened the inner door, shut it behind her, and she was in Wilfrid's arms. That was a complete refutation of presentiment; the longest and most satisfactory moment of the sort she had yet experienced. So long that she was afraid he would not let her go in time. At last she said, gently:

"Lunch has already been in a minute, darling, according to Stack."

"Stack has tact."

Not until after lunch, when they were alone once more with coffee, did discomfiture come with the suddenness of a thunderclap in a clear sky.

"That business has come out, Dinny."

What! That? *That!* She mastered the rush of her dismay.

"How?"

"A man called Telfourd Yule has brought the story back with him. They talk of it among the tribes. It'll be in the bazaars by now, in the London Clubs to-morrow. I shall be in Coventry in a few weeks' time. Nothing can stop a thing like that."

Without a word Dinny got up, pressed his head against her shoulder, then sat down beside him on the divan.

"I'm afraid you don't understand," he said, gently.

"That this makes any difference? No, I don't. The only difference could have been when you told me yourself. That made none. How can this, then?"

"How can I marry you?"

"That sort of thing is only in books, Wilfrid. *We* won't have linkéd misery long drawn out."

"False heroics are not in my line either; but I don't think you see yet."

"I do. Now you can stand up straight again, and those who can't understand —well, they don't matter."

"Then don't your people matter?"

"Yes, they matter."

"But you don't suppose for a minute that they'll understand?"

"I shall make them."

"My poor dear!"

It struck her, ominously, how quiet and gentle he was being. He went on:

"I don't know your people, but if they're the sort you've described—charm ye never so wisely, they won't rise. My dear, they can't, it's against their root convictions."

"They're fond of me."

"That will make it all the more impossible for them to see you tied to me."

Dinny drew away a little and sat with her chin on her hands. Then, without looking at him, she said:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Do you want to get rid of me, Wilfrid?"

"Dinny!"

"Yes, but do you?"

He drew her into his arms. Presently she said, quietly:

"I see. Then if you don't, you must leave this to me. And anyway it's no good going to meet trouble. It isn't known yet in London. We'll wait until it is. I know you won't marry me till then, so I *must* wait. After that it will be a clear issue, but you mustn't be heroic then, Wilfrid, because it'll hurt me too much—too much." She clutched him suddenly; and he stayed silent.

With her cheek to his she said, quietly:

"Do you want me to be everything to you before you marry me; if so, I can."

"Dinny!"

"Very forward, isn't it?"

"No! But we'll wait. You make me feel too reverent."

She sighed. "Perhaps it's best."

Presently she said: "Will you leave it to me to tell my people everything or not?"

"I will leave anything to you."

"And if I want you to meet any one of them, will you?"

Wilfrid nodded.

"I won't ask you to come to Condaford—yet. That's all settled then. Now tell me exactly how you heard about this."

When he had finished, she said reflectively:

"Michael and Uncle Lawrence. That will make it easier. Now, darling, I'm going. It'll be good for Stack, and I want to think. I can only think when I'm insulated from you."

"Angel."

She took his head between her hands. "Don't be tragic, and I won't either. Could we go joy-riding on Thursday? Good! Foch at noon! I'm not an angel, I'm your love."

She went dizzily down the stairs, now that she was alone, terribly conscious of the ordeal before them. She turned suddenly towards Oxford Street. 'I'll go and see Uncle Adrian,' she thought.

Adrian's thoughts at his Museum had been troubled of late by the claim of the Gobi desert to be the cradle of Homo Sapiens. The idea had been patented and put on the market, and it bid fair to have its day. He was reflecting on the changeability of anthropological fashions when Dinny was announced.

"Ah! Dinny! I've been in the Gobi desert all the afternoon, and was just thinking of a nice cup of 'hot' tea. What do you say?"

"China tea always gives me an 'ick feeling, Uncle."

"We don't go in for so-called luxuries. My duenna here makes good old Dover tea with leaves in it, and we have the homely bun."

"Perfect! I came to tell you that I've given my young heart."

Adrian stared.

"It's really rather a terrible tale, so can I take off my hat?"

"My dear," said Adrian, "take off anything. Have tea first. Here it is."

While she was having tea Adrian regarded her with a rueful smile, caught, as it were, between his moustache and goatee. Since the tragic Ferse affair she had been more than ever his idea of a niece; and he perceived that she was really troubled.

Lying back in the only easy chair, with her knees crossed and the tips of her fingers pressed together, she looked, he thought, ethereal, as if she might suddenly float, and his eyes rested with comfort on the cap of her chestnut hair. But his face grew perceptibly longer while she was telling him her tale, leaving nothing out. She stopped at last and added:

"Uncle, please don't look like that!"

"Was I?"

"Yes."

"Well, Dinny, is it surprising?"

"I want your 'reaction,' as they call it, to what he did." And she looked straight into his eyes.

"My personal reaction? Without knowing him—judgment reserved."

"If you wouldn't mind, you shall know him."

Adrian nodded, and she said:

"Tell me the worst. What will the others who don't know him think and do?"

"What was your own reaction, Dinny?"

"I knew him."

"Only a week."

"And ten years."

"Oh! don't tell me that a glimpse and three words at a wedding——"

"The grain of mustard-seed, dear. Besides, I'd read the poem, and knew from that all his feelings. He isn't a believer, it must have seemed to him like some monstrous practical joke."

"Yes, yes, I've read his verse—scepticism and love of beauty. His type blooms after long national efforts, when the individual's been at a discount, and the State has exacted everything. Ego crops out and wants to kick the State and all its shibboleths. I understand all that. But— You've never been out of England, Dinny."

"Only Italy, Paris, and the Pyrenees."

"They don't count. You've never been where England has to have a certain prestige. For Englishmen in such parts of the world it's all for one and one for all."

"I don't think he realised that at the time, Uncle."

Adrian looked at her, and shook his head.

"I still don't," said Dinny. "And thank God he didn't, or I should never have known him. Ought one to sacrifice oneself for false values?"

"That's not the point, my dear. In the East, where religion still means everything, you can't exaggerate the importance attached to a change of faith. Nothing could so damage the Oriental's idea of the Englishman as a recantation at the pistol's point. The question before him was: Do I care enough for what is thought of my country and my people to die sooner than lower that conception? Forgive me, Dinny, but that was, brutally, the issue."

She was silent for a minute and then said:

"I'm perfectly sure Wilfrid would have died sooner than do lots of things that would have lowered that conception; but he simply couldn't admit that the Eastern conception of an Englishman ought to rest on whether he's a Christian or not."

"That's special pleading; he not only renounced Christianity, he accepted Islam—one set of superstitions for another."

"But, can't you see, Uncle, the whole thing was a monstrous jest to him?"

"No, my dear, I don't think I can."

Dinny leaned back, and he thought how exhausted she looked.

"Well, if *you* can't, no one else will. I mean no one of our sort, and that's what I wanted to know."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A bad ache started in Adrian's midriff. "Dinny, there are ten days of this behind you, and the rest of your life before you; you told me he'd give you up—for which I respect him. Now, doesn't it need a wrench, if not for your sake—for his?"

Dinny smiled.

"Uncle, you're so renowned for dropping your best pals when they're in a mess. And you know so little about love! You only waited eighteen years. Aren't you rather funny?"

"Admitted," said Adrian. "I suppose the word 'Uncle' came over me. If I knew that Desert was likely to be as faithful as you, I should say: 'Go to it and be damned in your own ways, bless you!'"

"Then you must see him."

"Yes; but I've seen people seem so unalterably in love that they were divorced within the year. I knew a man so completely satisfied by his honeymoon, that he took a mistress two months later."

"We," murmured Dinny, "are not of that devouring breed. Seeing so many people on the screen examining each other's teeth, has spiritualised me, I know."

"Who has heard of this development?"

"Michael and Uncle Lawrence, possibly Aunt Em. I don't know whether to tell them at Condaford."

"Let me talk to Hilary. He'll have another point of view; and it won't be orthodox."

"Oh! Yes, I don't mind Uncle Hilary." And she rose. "May I bring Wilfrid to see you, then?"

Adrian nodded; and, when she had gone, stood again in front of a map of Mongolia, where the Gobi desert seemed to bloom like the rose in comparison with the wilderness across which his favourite niece was moving.

XII

Dinny stayed on at Mount Street for dinner to see Sir Lawrence.

She was in his study when he came in, and said at once:

"Uncle Lawrence, Aunt Em knows what you and Michael know, doesn't she?"

"She does, Dinny. Why?"

"She's been so discreet. I've told Uncle Adrian, he seems to think Wilfrid has lowered English prestige in the East. Just what is this English prestige? I thought we were looked on as a race of successful hypocrites. And in India as arrogant bullies."

Sir Lawrence wriggled.

"You're confusing national with individual reputation. The things are totally distinct. The individual Englishman in the East is looked up to as a man who isn't to be rattled, who keeps his word, and sticks by his own breed."

Dinny flushed. The implication was not lost on her.

"In the East," Sir Lawrence went on: "the Englishman, or rather the Briton, because as often as not he's a Scot or a Welshman or a North Irishman, is generally isolated: traveller, archæologist, soldier, official, civilian, planter, doctor, engineer, or missionary, he's almost always head man of a small separate show; he maintains himself against odds on the strength of the Englishman's reputation. If a single Englishman is found wanting, down goes the stock of all those other isolated Englishmen. People know that and recognise its importance. That's what you're up against, and it's no use under-estimating. You can't expect Orientals, to whom religion means something, to understand that to some of us it means nothing. An Englishman to them is a believing Christian, and if he recants, he's understood as recanting his most precious belief."

Dinny said drily: "In fact, then, Wilfrid has no case in the eyes of our world."

"In the eyes of the world that runs the Empire, I'm afraid—none, Dinny. Could it be otherwise? Unless there were complete mutual confidence between these isolated beings that none of them will submit to dictation, take a dare, or let the others down, the thing wouldn't work at all. Now would it?"

"I never thought about it."

"Well, you can take it from me. Michael has explained to me how Desert's mind worked; and from the point of view of a disbeliever like myself, there's a lot to be said. I should intensely dislike being wiped out over such an issue. But it wasn't the real issue; and if you say: 'He didn't see that,' then I'm afraid my answer is he didn't because he has too much spiritual pride. And that won't help him as a defence, because spiritual pride is anathema to the Services, and indeed to the world generally. It's the quality, you remember, that got Lucifer into trouble."

Dinny, who had listened with her eyes fixed on her uncle's twisting features, said:

"It's extraordinary the things one can do without."

Sir Lawrence screwed in a puzzled eyeglass.

"Have you caught the jumping habit from your aunt?"

"If one can't have the world's approval, one can do without it."

"'The world well lost for love,' sounds gallant, Dinny, but it's been tried out and found wanting. Sacrifice on one side is the worst foundation for partnership, because the other side comes to resent it."

"I don't expect more happiness than most people get."

"That's not as much as I want for you, Dinny."

"Dinner!" said Lady Mont, in the doorway: "Have you a vacuum, Dinny? They use those cleaners," she went on, as they went towards the dining room, "for horses now."

"Why not for human beings," murmured Dinny; "and clear out their fears and superstitions? Uncle wouldn't approve."

"You've been talkin', then. Blore, go away!"

When he had gone, she added: "I'm thinkin' of your father, Dinny."

"So am I."

"I used to get over him. But daughters. Still, he must."

"Em!" said Sir Lawrence, warningly, as Blore came back.

"Well," said Lady Mont, "beliefs and that—too fatiguin'. I never liked christenin's—so unfeelin' to the baby; and puttin' it upon other people; only they don't bother, except for cups and Bibles. Why do they put fern-leaves on cups? Or is that archery? Uncle Cuffs won a cup at archery when he was a curate. They used. Well, it's all very agitatin'."

"Aunt Em," said Dinny, "all I hope and want is that no one will agitate himself over me and my small affair. If people won't agitate we can be happy."

"So wise! Lawrence, tell Michael that. Blore! Give Miss Dinny some sherry."

Dinny, putting her lips to the sherry,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

looked across at her aunt's face. It was comforting—its slightly raised eyebrows, drooped lids, curved nose, and as if slightly powdered hair, so well held above its comely neck, shoulders and bust.

In the taxi for Paddington she had so close a vision of Wilfrid alone, with this hanging over him, that she very nearly leaned out to say: "Cork Street." But that would be to 'fuss' indeed! The cab turned a corner into Praed Street. All the worry in the world seemed to come from the conflict of love against love. If only her people didn't love her, and she them, how simple things would be!

A porter was saying: "Any luggage, Miss?"

"None, thank you." As a little girl she had always meant to marry a porter —they were so nice! That was before her music master came from Oxford. He had gone off to the war when she was ten. She bought a magazine and took her seat in the train. But she was very tired and lay back in her corner of the third-class carriage; railway travelling was a severe tax on her always slender purse. With head tilted, she went to sleep.

When she alighted from the train there was a nearly full moon, and the night was blowy and sweet-smelling. She would have to walk. It was light enough to take the short cut, and she climbed the first stile into the field path. She thought of the night, nearly two years ago, when she came back by this train with the news of Hubert's release, and found her father sitting up, grey and worn, in his study, and how years had seemed to drop off him when she told him the good news. And now she had news that must grieve him. It was her father she really dreaded facing. Her mother, yes! Mother, though gentle, was stubborn; but women had not the same hard and fast convictions about what was not 'done' as men. Hubert? In old days she would have minded him most. Curious how lost he was to her! Hubert would be dreadfully upset. He was rigid in his views of what was 'the game.' Well! she could 'bear' his disapproval. But Father! It seemed so unfair to him, after his forty years of hard service!

A brown owl floated from the hedge over to some stacks. These moony nights were owl-nights and there would be the screams of captured victims so dreadful in the night time. Yet who could help liking owls, their blunt soft floating flight, their measured stirring calls? The next stile led her on to their own land. There was a linhay in this field where her father's old charger sheltered at night. Was it Plutarch or Pliny who had said: 'For my part I would not sell even an old ox who had laboured for me.' Nice man! Now that the sound of the train had died away it was very quiet, only the brushing of a little wind on young leaves, and the stamp of old Kismet's foot in the linhay. She crossed a second field and came to the narrow tree-trunk bridge. The night's sweetness was like the feeling always within her now. She crossed the plank and slipped in among the apple trees. They seemed to live brightly between her and the moving, moonlit, wind-brushed sky. They seemed to breathe, almost to be singing in praise at the unfolding of their blossoms. They were lighted in a thousand shapes of whitened branches, and all beautiful, as if some one had made each with a rapt and moonstruck pleasure and brightened it with starshine. And this had been done in here each spring for a hundred years and more. The whole world seemed miraculous on a night like this, but always the yearly miracle of the apple blooming was to Dinny most moving of all. The many miracles of England thronged her memory, while she stood among the old trunks inhaling the lichen-bark-dusted air. Upland grass with larks singing; the stilly drip in goldened coverts when sun came after rain; gorse on wind-blown commons; horses turning and turning at the end of the long mole-coloured furrows; river waters now bright, now green-tinged beneath the willows; thatch and its wood smoke; swathed hay meadows, tawnied cornfields; the blueish distances beyond; and the ever-changing sky—all these were as jewels in her mind, but the chief was this white magic of the spring. She became conscious that the long grass was drenched and her shoes and stockings wet through; there was light enough to see in that grass the stars of jonquil, grape hyacinth and the pale cast-out tulips; there would be polyanthus, too, blue-bells and cowslips—a few. She slipped on upward, cleared the trees and stood a moment to look back at the whiteness of the whole. 'It might have dropped from the moon,' she thought: 'My best stockings, too!'

Across the low-walled fruit garden and lawn she came to the terrace. Past eleven! Only her father's study window lighted on the ground floor! How like that other night!

'Shan't tell him,' she thought, and tapped on it.

He let her in.

"Hallo, Dinny, you didn't stop the night at Mount Street, then?"

"No, Dad, there's a limit to my powers of borrowing nightgowns."

"Sit down and have some tea. I was just going to make some."

"Darling, I came through the orchard and I'm wet to the knees."

"Take off your stockings; here's an old pair of slippers."

Dinny stripped off the stockings and sat contemplating her legs in the lamplight, while the General lit the etna. He liked to do things for himself. She watched him bending over the tea things, and thought how trim he still was, and how quick and precise his movements. His browned hands, with little dark hairs on them, had long clever fingers. He stood up, motionless, watching the flame.

"Wants a new wick," he said. "There's going to be bad trouble in India, I'm afraid."

"India seems to be getting almost more trouble than it's worth to us."

The General turned his face with its high but small cheek-bones; his eyes rested on her, and his thin lips beneath the close little grey moustache smiled.

"That often happens with trusts, Dinny. You've got very nice legs."

"So I ought, dear, considering you and mother."

"Mine are all right for a boot—stringy. Did you ask Mr. Desert down?"

"No, not to-day."

The General put his hands into his side pockets. He had taken off his dinner jacket and was wearing an old snuff-coloured shooting coat; Dinny noticed that the cuffs were slightly frayed, and one leather button missing. His dark, high-shaped eyebrows contracted till there were three ridges right in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

centre of his forehead; he said gently:

"I don't understand that change of religion, you know, Dinny. Milk or lemon?"

"Lemon, please."

She was thinking: 'Now is the moment, after all. Courage!'

"Two lumps?"

"Three with lemon, Dad."

The General took up the tongs. He dropped three lumps into the cup, then a slice of lemon, put back the tongs, and bent down to the kettle.

"Boiling," he said, and filled up the cup; he put a covered spoonful of tea into it, withdrew the spoon and handed the cup to his daughter.

Dinny sat stirring the thin golden liquid. She took a sip, rested the cup on her lap, and turned her face up to him.

"I can explain it, Dad," and thought: 'It will only make him understand even less.'

The General filled his own cup, and sat down. Dinny clutched her spoon.

"You see, when Wilfrid was far out in Darfur he ran into a nest of fanatical Arabs, remaining from the Mahdi times. The chief of them had him brought into his tent and offered him his life if he would embrace Islam."

She saw her father make a little convulsive movement, so that some of the tea was spilled into his saucer. He raised the cup and poured it back. Dinny went on:

"Wilfrid is like most of us nowadays about belief, only a great deal more so. It isn't only that he doesn't believe in Christianity, he actually hates any set forms of religion, he thinks they divide mankind and do more harm and bring more suffering than anything else. And then, you know—or you would if you'd read his poetry, Dad—the war left him very bitter about the way lives are thrown away, simply spilled out like water at the orders of people who don't know what they're about."

Again the General made that slight convulsive movement.

"Yes, Dad, but I've heard Hubert talk in much the same way about that. Anyway it has left Wilfrid with a horror of wasting life, and the deepest distrust of all shibboleths and beliefs. He only had about five minutes to decide in. It wasn't cowardice, it was just bitter scorn that men can waste each other's lives for beliefs that to him seem equally futile. And he just shrugged and accepted. Having accepted he had to keep his word and go through the forms. Of course, you don't know him, so I suppose it's useless." She sighed and drank thirstily.

The General had put his own cup down; he rose, filled a pipe, lighted it and stood by the hearth. His face was lined and dark and grave. At last he said:

"I'm out of my depth. Is the religion of one's fathers for hundreds of years to go for nothing, then? Is all that has made us the proudest people in the world to be chucked away at the bidding of an Arab? Have men like the Lawrences, John Nicholson, Chamberlayne, Sandeman, a thousand others, who spent and gave their lives to build up an idea of the English as brave men and true, to be knocked into a cocked hat by every Englishman who's threatened with a pistol?"

Dinny's cup clattered on its saucer.

"Yes, but if not by every Englishman, Dinny, why by one? Why by this one?"

Quivering all over, Dinny did not answer. Neither Adrian nor Sir Lawrence had made her feel like this—for the first time she had been reached and moved by the other side. Some age-long string had been pulled within her, or she was infected by the emotion of one whom she had always admired and loved, and whom she had hardly ever seen stirred to eloquence. She could not speak.

"I don't know if I'm a religious man," the General went on, "the faith of my fathers is enough for me"—and he made a gesture, as if adding, 'I leave myself aside'—"but, Dinny, I could not take dictation of that sort; I could not, and I cannot understand how he could have."

Dinny said, quietly: "I won't try to make you, Dad; let's take it that you can't. Most people have done something in their lives that other people could not understand if it were known. The difference here is that this thing of Wilfrid's *is* known."

"You mean the threat is known—the reason for the——?"

Dinny nodded.

"How?"

"A Mr. Yule brought the story back from Egypt; Uncle Lawrence thinks it can't be scotched. I want you to know the worst." She gathered her wet stockings and shoes in her hand. "Would you mind telling Mother and Hubert for me, Dad?" And she stood up.

The General drew deeply at his pipe, which emitted a gurgling sound.

"Your pipe wants cleaning, dear. I'll do it to-morrow."

"He'll be a pariah," burst from the General, "he'll be a pariah! Dinny, Dinny!"

No two words could have moved and disarmed her more. At one stroke they shifted his opposition from the personal to the altruistic.

She bit her lip and said:

"Dad, I shall pipe my eye if I stay down here with you. And my feet are very cold. Good-night, darling!"

She turned and went quickly to the door, whence she saw him standing like a horse that has just been harnessed.

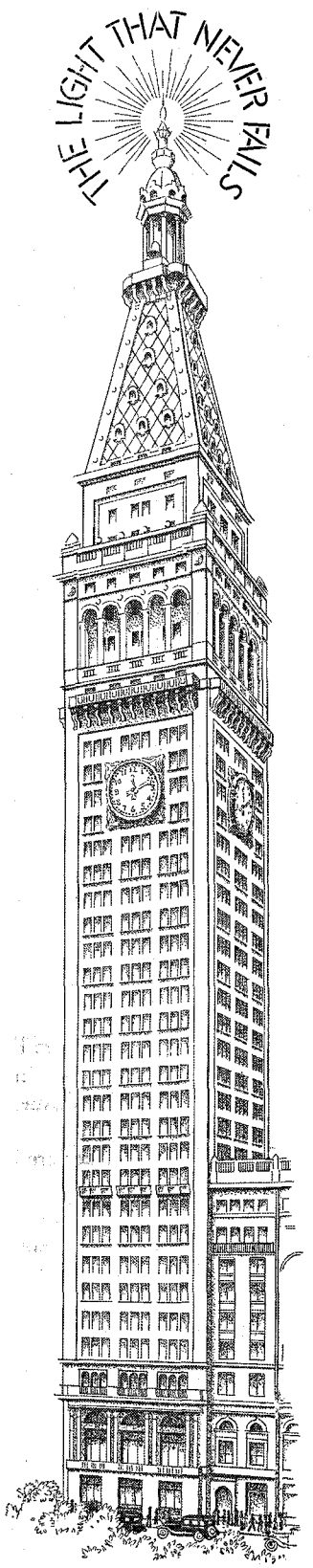
She went up to her room and sat on her bed, rubbing her cold feet one against the other. It was done! Now she had only to confront the feeling that would henceforth surround her like a wall over which she must climb to the fulfilment of her love. And what surprised her most while she rubbed and rubbed, was knowing that her father's words had drawn from her a secret endorsement which had not made the slightest inroad on her feeling for Wilfrid. Was love, then, quite detached from judgment? Was the old image of a blind God true? Was it even true that defects in the loved one made him the dearer? That seemed borne out, at all events, by the dislike one had for the too good people in books; one's revolt against the heroic figure; one's impatience at the sight of virtue rewarded.

'Is it,' she thought, 'that my family's standard is higher than mine; or is it simply that I want him close to me, and don't care what he is or does so long as he comes?' And she had a strange and sudden feeling of knowing Wilfrid to the very core, with all his faults and shortcomings, and with a something that redeemed and made up for them, and would keep her love alive, for in that, in that only, was an element mysterious to her. And she thought with a rueful smile: 'All evil I know by instinct; it's goodness, truth, beauty, that keep me guessing!' And almost too tired to undress, she got into bed.

To be continued in the October Scribner's and concluded in November.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Get Readjusted



THE MEN who made the United States the richest country in the world did not go about wringing their hands and quaking in their boots. They worked—whether the going was easy or whether it was hard.

For nearly three years too many men, who themselves have had plenty to eat and to drink, good beds to sleep in and comfortable homes, have spent hours and hours predicting hard luck and disaster.

Last spring such men were saying that the United States appeared to be headed for bankruptcy. Since then the Government has begun to cut its expenses and increase its income. It is resolutely facing its difficulties. There is no reason for anyone to fear that the nation may fail in its obligations, or collapse.

The man who is saturated with gloom spreads it. When he loses his sane, clear-eyed viewpoint he may seek sympathy, but what he really needs is to be shaken out of an unhealthy frame of mind.

And the man who hoards not only robs his family but fails to do his share in promoting normal business and employment of workers. He aggravates the condition which he deplores.

Some men need jobs—need them badly. They must be helped. But more men need to get readjusted to conditions as they exist. These men may need to readjust their mode of living or their way of thinking.

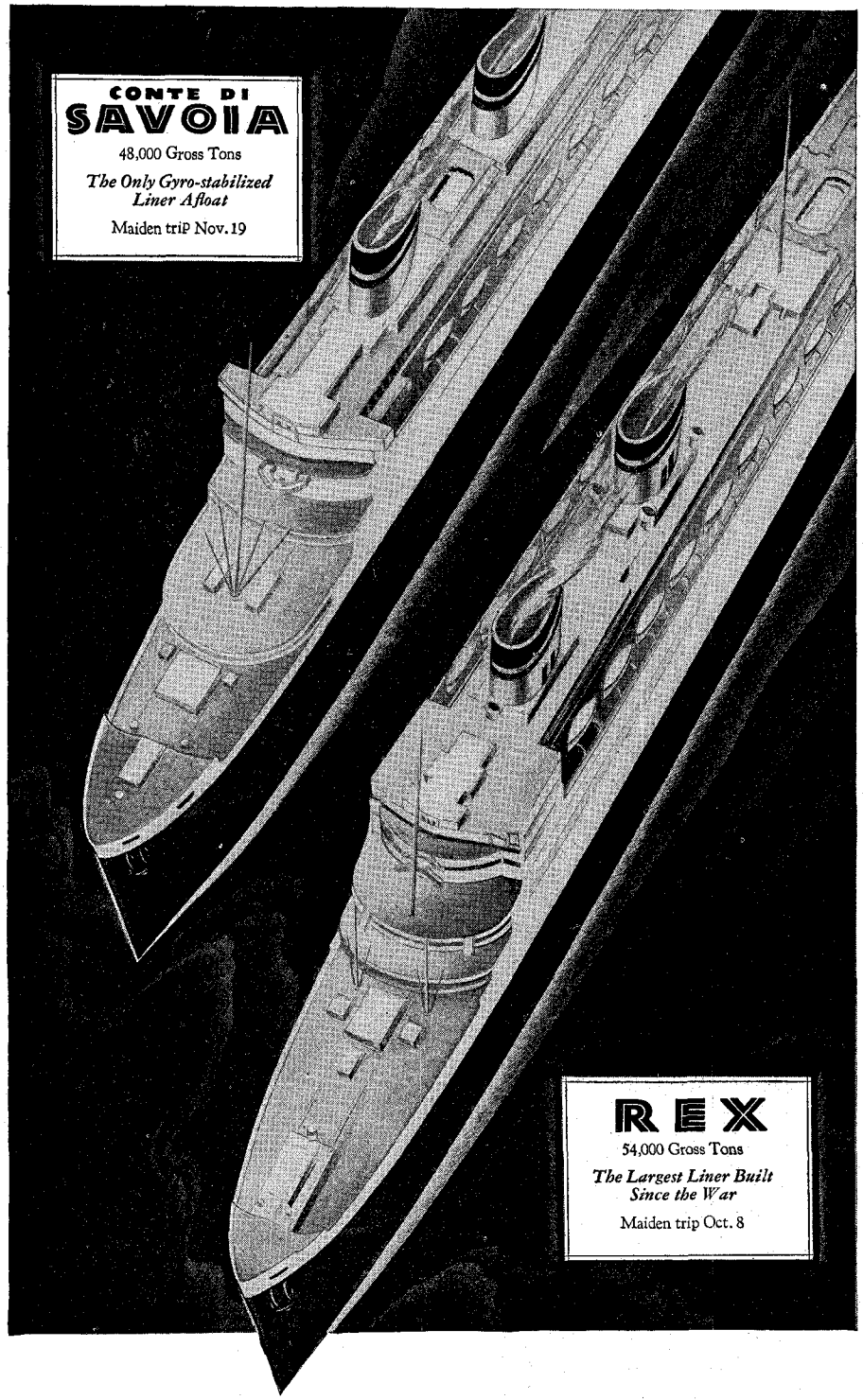
Worries fester and grow in the dark. They shrivel and vanish in the light. There are times in every man's life—whether he be strong or weak, brave or cowardly—when he needs the counsel of someone who is unafraid. And there are many who know that our country has battled through difficult periods and has always emerged stronger than before.

Get readjusted.

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
FREDERICK H. ECKER, PRESIDENT
ONE MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NEW REGIME *in* EUROPEAN TRAVEL



TO the Mediterranean in Five Days! With this unheard of speed, with the rare traditions of the Italian Marine, together with an advanced design that includes enormous deck-space and the largest outdoor tiled pools afloat, the REX and Conte di SAVOIA will bring you a new conception of luxury at sea. Brilliantly they lead a fleet of favorites . . . ROMA, Conte GRANDE, AUGUSTUS, SATURNIA, VULCANIA . . . in frequent sailings over the route chosen by hosts of initiated American travelers.

Apply local agent or 1 State Street, New York; 86 Arlington Street, Boston; 333 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago; 1601 Walnut Street, Philadelphia; 944 Arcade, Union Trust Bldg., Cleveland

ITALIAN LINE

Behind the Scenes

JOHN GALSWORTHY, the distinguished English novelist, is so well known in all parts of the world that it would be supererogatory to introduce him to a present-day audience.

FRANK R. KENT, whose papers in the Magazine on the political situation have received widespread comment, will conclude the series with an article in our November number.

ELLIOTT MERRICK is a native of Montclair, N. J., a graduate of Yale and a newspaperman, who finally decided that life as we live it was not worth the effort. Mr. and Mrs. Merrick returned to New Jersey from Labrador during the summer for the birth of their first child and are now awaiting an appointment to a school on the Aleutian Islands in the government service.

ALVAH C. BESSIE is a graduate of Columbia University, was born in New York City, and now lives on a farm at Londonderry, Vt.

GILBERT SELDES is now a columnist on *The New York Journal.*

MERIDEL LE SUEUR is living in St. Paul.

GRACE FLANDRAU, after residence in Mexico and France, has returned to her home in St. Paul, where she will complete the novel on which she is now working.

HELEN BIRD lives in Pocatello, Idaho, quite content to be there safely after the shipwreck experience which she recounts in her present narrative.

ALBERT GUERARD is Professor of Comparative Literature at Stanford University.

CATHARINE MORRIS WRIGHT gives the history of her happy home in Glenside, Pa., in her article in this issue.

When Grace Jones Morgan declared her independence of her children ["Who Lives My Life? July SCRIBNER's] she started an argument among SCRIBNER's readers which grows with the weeks. We have had many offers of articles in refutation and many letters and newspaper comments. Marshall Maslin, writing in *The San Francisco Call-Bulletin,* "wonders how Mrs. Morgan is getting along with her family these days" and concludes with the thought that the children "if they have any of Grace Morgan's spirit in them, are secretly proud of their mother." Representative of the other side of the argument is the letter which follows:

Sirs:

To quote Mrs. Morgan "They must have the radio. Moreover when we are alone, they must

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SEDGWICK
INDIVIDUAL ELEVATOR

MAKE THE WISH COME TRUE

If the doctor has ordered you not to climb stairs, or if you are confined to a wheel chair, isn't it natural to wish that you could travel freely from floor to floor? You can make this wish come true for yourself, or for some dear one, by having us install a Sedgwick Individual Elevator. It will carry you safely, smoothly and with greatest comfort to and from any floor. Quickly installed in any residence. Lowest prices now. Deferred payments. Recommended by physicians. Write for booklet. Address SEDGWICK MACHINE WORKS, 155 West 15th St., New York.

For those who Cannot or SHOULD NOT climb stairs

HAPAG

Jan. 7, 1933 . .

The "Queen of Cruising Steamships" leaves New York for that greatest of de luxe travel adventures, those magical 38,000 miles and 4½ months of exploration in far-away lands, among strange peoples, seeing the wonders of the world.

RESOLUTE

WORLD CRUISE

This voyage is so timed that in all the thirty countries visited ideal weather holds sway. A wealth of de luxe shore excursions (11 days in India) is included in the low rates—from $2,000.

Your Travel Agent can advise you.

HAMBURG-AMERICAN LINE

39 Broadway New York

Branches and Agencies in all principal cities

have jazz music which my husband abhors, and they are disgusted with other music which he enjoys."

Were these children, I wonder, ever given a chance to learn how to appreciate good music? Were their finer sensibilities developed, or were they just raised on the theory that whenever they wanted a piece of candy, they got it? It would seem so. It looks suspiciously like an outgrowth of a childhood habit, indulged, of "'I want what I want when I want it' and Mother and Dad are here to see that I get it." How could there be any concern shown for Dad's preference, if the child never had to think about any one but himself?

I don't believe any parent has the right to expect a child to worship at the parental shrine. We are all prone to errors, and discussions with the child often teach what a command could not. My own small child is no angel, yet he asks to share his brother's toys, and he is taught to share any gifts that he receives. He has all the freedom he can use about his home, *provided,* he does not interfere with others in an objectionable manner. Small as he is, he has learned that every one must share, and I firmly believe with this as a background we shall avoid Mrs. Morgan's problem.

Circumstances today are very different from the customs of fifteen years ago. Boys of twenty-three years cannot very well marry and support a wife and family, unless they have inherited substantial incomes. And girls are able to find many interesting things with which to occupy their time, other than matrimony. If in the old days a daughter married in order to relieve the family burden, then we ought to rejoice that today we are able to keep our children with us longer, and that they are given more of an opportunity for self expression, before settling down to the usual business of running a home and rearing a baby or two.

I do not believe that Mrs. Morgan is going to destroy her home by beginning to "live her life." It is a shame she waited so long, because once that element of selfishness is eliminated, she is going to discover her children. And I believe the discovery will be a pleasant one. More power to her for having the courage to pull herself, and her husband, out of the rut into which they fell when the children were small. But to blame the younger generation for selfishness which was never altered, is, I believe, not quite fair.

JANET P. JOHL.

Torrence Place, Scarsdale, N. Y.

Doctor Briffault's refutation of the fact that "You Can't Change Human Nature" also made a deep impression.

Sirs:

Let me applaud Doctor Briffault's fight (in the SCRIBNER arena) with that old brute—dogma: "You can't change human Nature."

It is the truth as I have always felt it, but never before have I seen it so well expressed in terms of logic.

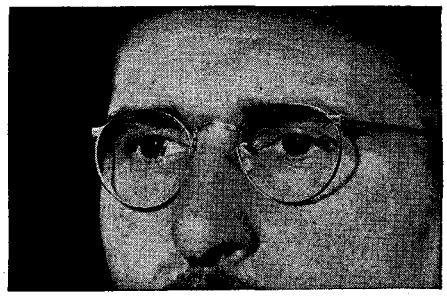
ART YOUNG.

Bethel, Conn.

Raymond Tompkins's article on the fervor with which the South preserves the Confederate spirit met a varied but hot response. *The Savannah (Ga.) Press,* after recounting the achievements of the Daughters of the Confederacy, says:

The old Confederate spirit is still in the South. It is deeply rooted in the instincts of the people; not only that, but it is deliberately fostered and preserved. This is all to the good. It is one of our finest possessions. . . . All of this is not helping anybody to forget the war of the 60's. Let this nation try to smother the Old South. It would have a hot problem and it does not wish to try it.

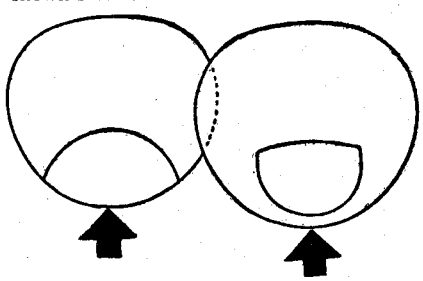
To eyes that are
FORTY YEARS OLD



Things don't "JUMP" WITH FUL-VUE BIFOCALS

THAT disconcerting blurring or movement of an object just as you reach for it—has been eliminated. You can now enjoy the big help of bifocals without confusion or annoyance.

You can identify the perfected Ful-Vue Bifocal by the shape of the small inset lens, shown below.



Old style bifocals

New FUL-VUE BIFOCALS

Because of the greater width at top of this near vision segment, the eye finds the fullest width of reading vision instantly, without head movement.

Tremendous strides have been made in recent years in the science of helping eyesight. The practice of this science demands years of training and experience, plus costly modern equipment. The rightness of your glasses depends on careful and scientific examination, selection based on intelligent study of the lines and contours of your face, and the most skillful and thorough fitting.

So don't just buy glasses at a price—don't be satisfied with hurried and inexpert service—seek the very best service available in your community.

A booklet we have prepared, "What You Should Know About Your Glasses," might help you a lot—and costs nothing. Please use the coupon.

AMERICAN OPTICAL COMPANY, *Southbridge, Mass.*

AMERICAN OPTICAL CO.,
Dept. B-6, Southbridge, Mass.
Without charge or obligation, please send me the booklet, "What You Should Know About Your Glasses."

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____

The name of the man who fits my glasses is

_____

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sirs:

Readers of Mr. Raymond S. Tompkins' article, "Confederate Daughters Stand Guard," will be interested in the significance of the term, "War Between the States," as taught by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. They teach that the war of the sixties was waged, not between two groups of States of the United States, as generally supposed, but between two separate nations, the United States and the Confederate States. As they put it: "the southern states had legally, constitutionally, and peacefully seceded from the other states of the union before a gun was fired, and their separate and distinct government was in operation prior to the breaking out of hostilities, therefore, were not of the same country as their foes:" and, further: "The government of the Confederate States of America was rightfully, lawfully and peacefully operating when the trumpet of battle sounded, and when it responded to arms it did so as an independent government in defense from the assault of another government, each in authority over and representing a separate dominion of states."

There is no authority for this attitude, as the Confederates were dealt with only as rebels by our Government, and as rebels they surrendered. The Constitution refers to this war as the rebellion, so the Congressional legislation sought by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to change the name of the War of the Rebellion (commonly called "Civil War" through Congressional courtesy to the Confederacy) to the name "War Between the States," would be but a gesture and entirely at variance with facts.

LUCY S. STEWART.

2110 Orrington Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Dividend Notice

Common Stock Quarterly Dividend No. 92 of 75 cents per share, payable August 15, 1932, to stockholders of record July 20, 1932.

$6.00 Preferred Stock Quarterly Dividend No. 100 of $1.50 per share, payable July 15, 1932, to stockholders of record June 30, 1932.

Dividends on the foregoing issues, as well as on all the outstanding Preferred issues of the subsidiary companies (whose common stocks are owned by Pacific Lighting Corporation) have been paid without interruption since the initial dividend.

PACIFIC LIGHTING CORPORATION

AND SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

Consolidated Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Cash Dividends for the Twelve Months Ended June 30

	1932	*1931*
GROSS REVENUE	$47,811,201.93	$46,703,890.91
Deduct Operating Expenses and Taxes	25,399,686.99	25,306,122.26
NET INCOME BEFORE BOND INTEREST	22,411,514.94	21,397,768.65
Deduct Bond Interest	5,495,265.98	5,673,530.26
NET INCOME AFTER BOND INTEREST	16,916,248.96	15,724,238.39
Deduct		
Depreciation	6,978,851.83	6,945,262.02
Amortization	275,329.47	351,326.03
NET INCOME BEFORE DIVIDENDS ON PREFERRED STOCK OF SUBSIDIARIES	9,662,067.66	8,427,650.34
Deduct		
Dividends on Preferred Stock of Subsidiaries	1,895,041.38	1,987,714.67
Dividends on Minority Interest in Common Stock	413.60	817.46
NET INCOME FOR PACIFIC LIGHTING CORPORATION	7,766,612.68	6,439,118.21
Dividends on Preferred Stock	882,245.92	832,864.10
Cash Dividends on Common Stock	4,825,893.00	4,825,893.00
REMAINDER TO SURPLUS	$ 2,058,473.76	$ 780,361.11
Per Share Balance Available for Dividends on Common Stock Equals	*$4.28*	*$3.49*
Special Reserve (not included in above report of revenue) of amounts collected under certain rates in litigation	$1,470,609.85	$ 779,792.58

PACIFIC LIGHTING CORPORATION, 433 CALIFORNIA ST., SAN FRANCISCO

We Look to Europe

By S. Palmer Harman

EVERY depression is a law to itself as to why it begins and the way it ends, but certain happenings have characterized the ending of depressions in the United States with sufficient regularity to suggest that they are important general factors in periods of recovery. One of these, in past years, has been the resumption of European lending to America, after such lending had been halted by alarm over conditions in this country. Another has been the revival of American export trade, particularly in wheat and cotton. In so far as these two things have been essential factors in business revival in this country, it may be said that the impulse for that revival has often, in the past, originated abroad.

At first glance this does not appear very encouraging, for foreign countries are obviously in no position to lend us money on a great scale at this time. Foreign investors doubtless will place considerable amounts of money in American securities again. In fact, they are already doing so. But on balance, the American people themselves have invested vast sums abroad in the last decade, and on a considerable part of these investments payments have been suspended, while we are being asked to cancel or reduce another huge part of the debt, thereby cutting down, in law as in fact, the flow of money on which we had been counting to meet our own internal obligations and provide capital for investment.

Before concluding, however, that one of the main props has been knocked from under business revival in this country, it will be well to look sharply at what is taking place in foreign countries and see whether some tentative conclusions, not altogether dark, can be drawn from those events. It will be necessary to look very sharply indeed, for one of the first things that comes into view is the suppression of civil government in Prussia and the establishment of military rule in Berlin, with all that these violent measures imply as to continued unsettlement in German political and business affairs. But a little further back stands Lausanne and the fact that the conference there brought an end to German reparation payments.

Those payments had already ceased, it is true, and nobody expected them to be resumed, but the statesmen at Lausanne gave official recognition to the stoppage. They did not go the whole distance, and attached a reservation to their act; but they went so far that they can never retrace their steps. The most that can ever be demanded of Germany in the future is about $720,000,000—less than two years' payments under the Young Plan. New factors may prevent Europe from recovering now, but in any case recovery was impossible as long as the demand for, and attempt to pay, reparations threatened to sink the German economy on every pay-day.

The Lausanne settlement may be regarded as an involuntary act, enforced by desperate conditions; but another thing has occurred which was based, not on immediate necessity but on a cool calculation that the monetary situation had improved. This is the conversion of the gigantic British 5 per cent War Loan, of which more than £2,000,000,000 is outstanding. Holders of these bonds have been notified that on next December 1 new bonds will be offered in exchange, bearing only 3½ per cent interest. With a splendid gesture of assurance, the British Treasury has notified these investors that if they do not like the new rate, they will be paid off in cash. In any case, the 5 per cent loan will be cancelled.

Thus, at one stroke, Great Britain has reduced its interest charges on this loan 30 per cent, which is equivalent to cancelling some £600,000,000 of the debt. The British national income will be no larger than before, but if the operation succeeds it will mean that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about £30,000,000 of that income which hitherto flowed from taxpayers into the Treasury each year, and out again to meet the interest requirements of the bonds, will no longer follow this deadening course but will be available for new investment or for private spending.

The Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa, which is in progress at this writing, is a natural sequel to the improvement in credit connoted by the British War Loan conversion. With money rates becoming easier and the British debt burden reduced, the next step is to take positive measures for promoting trade. It is not possible at this moment to speak with confidence about results at Ottawa. Certainly, it is not a good thing for the rest of the world (and probably not for the British Empire) if additional barriers are erected to obstruct international trade; not because the trade will be any less in volume, but because it will be forced out of the channels which it has grooved for itself and the cutting of new channels is always slow and costly. The proposals to exclude American steel products from Canada, and to shut Russian trade out of England in favor of the Dominions, which were broached in the early days of the conference, were not a particularly helpful way to start the discussions. They created the impression that the Ottawa conference might degenerate into a carnival of tariff making, of which the world has already had too much. But as a serious attempt to discover ways in which trade can be conducted more advantageously, the meeting of the Empire delegates is a cheering omen for everybody. At worst it may be said that if the international balances are to be changed, the sooner we know about it and about the ways in which the change is to occur, the better it will be.

As far as American trade revival is concerned, all these developments are of remote and indirect import. We had no official part at Lausanne, our government debt is still mounting rapidly instead of being decreased, and we have been mere onlookers at the Ottawa spectacle. If progress is being made by other countries, the question is whether the United States is not standing still. In spite of all the efforts of Congress and the Administration, it has not proved possible to start business going on a larger scale. Instead, the recent Congress left us with a tremendous equipment of relief and emergency legislation, useful for its purpose but of doubtful effect as a business stimulus. We have a new law whereby the Government will provide up to $125,000,000 to ease the position of building and loan associations and other holders of frozen real-estate mortgages. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation is empowered to make enormous loans to States and private enterprises for productive purposes. National banks are empowered to emit some $995,000,000 of bond-secured currency, which violates the principle of the "elastic" currency provided by the Federal Reserve, and which will probably never be issued in substantial amount except in an emergency. The Federal Reserve Banks themselves are authorized to make loans to corporations and other borrowers, instead of merely to member banks, as in the past. No great amount of such lending seems probable. A plan for the consolidation of Eastern railroads into four great systems has been approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission, but years will probably be required to put the plan into effect, and its benefits are debatable. Electric holding companies are being attacked on a wide front by both State and Federal authorities and an era of lower rates is definitely in prospect.

How, then, can the evidences of improvement in conditions abroad, slight as they are, hold the promise of improvement here? Simply in this respect, that they are steps toward the orderly adjustment of debts and trade which, if carried out successfully, will promote the international flow of funds and hence of goods. We cannot look forward to a great influx of capital from Europe, and actually we would not know what to do with it if it came; but if the debts owed to us which are now threatened with default are actually paid or placed on a solid and recognized basis of adjustment, we shall get a large part of our own money back from abroad, and we shall know what to do with that. It is estimated that German citizens and corporations own a billion dollars of assets abroad—money which literally is afraid to go home for fear of confiscation or loss in other ways. If those funds are repatriated and put to work, American banks will certainly be more likely to recover a sizable part of the $700,000,000 of money which, a year ago, it was estimated that they owned in Germany and were unable to withdraw from that country because it was "frozen." Europe will not pull us out of depression by lending us money or buying our surplus wheat; but Europe will help us enormously if it puts its own house in order—and if we simultaneously do the same thing.

You may purchase
Scribner's Magazine
each month at

The Crillon, Paris
The Savoy, London
The Adlon, Berlin
The Anstel, Amsterdam
The Royal Poinciana, Palm Beach

Achievement
in Public Service

IMPROVED *service at reasonable rates to an increasing number of customers—this has been the aim and accomplishment of the Associated System. This achievement is recorded in the following facts:*

352,109 new customers not previously served by the same properties have been added since 1925.

Service to rural areas is now supplied in scores of communities where none or very inadequate service existed before.

$79,000,000 for new construction since 1928. Provision for replacement of worn-out equipment $9,754,000 in 1931.

17.8% increase in use of electricity per residential customer since 1929.

12% average decline in rates for residential electricity during the last four years.

$7,366,531 for taxes paid or accrued by Associated System in 1931.

● All these factors are evidence of the System's success in providing satisfactory utility service for 6,200,000 persons in 3,000 communities. The Associated System offers this accomplishment as an achievement in public service.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FACILITIES, SERVICES, RATES, WRITE

Associated Gas & Electric System

61 BROADWAY • • NEW YORK

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHERE-TO-GO
Hotel, Resort, and Travel Department
1906 - Every Month in 7 Magazines - 1932

Atlantic Monthly, Current History, The Forum, The Golden Book, Harpers Magazine, Review of Reviews - World's Work and Scribner's Magazine

For space and rates write to
The Where-to-go Bureau, 8 Beacon Street
Boston, Mass.

TRAVEL

India

$400
MONTH'S
WINTER TOUR

● Never has the dollar bought so much in rupees. See India this winter . . . go as you please . . . live like a rajah on the cost of a Ford. Royal Delhi, Taj Mahal, Afghan Peshawar, pilgrims at Benares, the buried cities of Ceylon, fascinating bazaars. Write for information, itineraries to Delhi House, 38 East 57th Street, New York, or your own agent.

INDIA STATE RAILWAYS

EUROPE $5.95 a day
All Countries. All Expenses. 1st Class Hotels
26,000 Satisfied Clients. Send for booklet.
ALLEN TOURS, 154 Boylston St., BOSTON

WHERE-EVER-YOU-GO

At home or abroad, form the Virginia Walton habit. The Fifth Avenue Section, on page 2 of this issue, gives only a hint of the things she can buy for you. She makes no charge for her services, and a letter to her will bring you expert shopping advice. She has been shopping for Scribner readers for over sixteen years.

Virginia Walton

of Scribner's Magazine
597 Fifth Avenue
New York City

AN AUDIENCE UNSURPASSED

Based on their purchasing power, low cost per thousand to reach them, Fifth Avenue bus passengers form one of the most unusual constituencies in the City

Bus passengers include not only a group of New Yorkers with above the average income who are glad to pay 10 cents for a clean, seated ride, but also there are included a great many visitors from all parts of the country who spend more in one week here than they would in four at home.

Every advertiser I have ever spoken to considers he gets a wonderful mass circulation in the subways and elevated—he does—and he also gets a wonderful *mass class* circulation in the Fifth Avenue buses. Each subway and elevated car averages 300,000 passengers a year. Each bus averages 150,000 a year—100,000 inside and 50,000 upstairs. Bus passengers not being allowed to stand probably gives the impression of less volume than it actually is.

Every department store and specialty shop's advertisement in the newspapers helps to create Fifth Avenue bus passengers. That numbered among our passengers are thousands of shoppers is best proven by the fact that in one year we delivered to the John Wanamaker store 284,294 passengers and we carried away from this store in the same year 366,918 passengers. We also have a check-up showing that we delivered to six leading department stores on Fifth Avenue from 134,000 to 423,000 passengers in a year. On the basis of our rate to reach a thousand passengers, advertising space in the Fifth Avenue buses is a good purchase, not only for local but for national advertisers.

We are prepared to submit facts to advertisers that we believe will be eye-openers. Write us for more information if you want to cultivate the best group of people in the City of New York gotten together by any one advertising medium.

Agency commission 15% — cash discount 2%

JOHN H. LIVINGSTON, JR.
Advertising Space in the Fifth Avenue Coaches
425 Fifth Avenue, New York City Tel. Cal. 5-2151

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED